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JOHN BULL

THE REAL STORY OF
LAURENCE OLIVIER
—EARLY STRUGGLE FOR SUCCESS
Page 7

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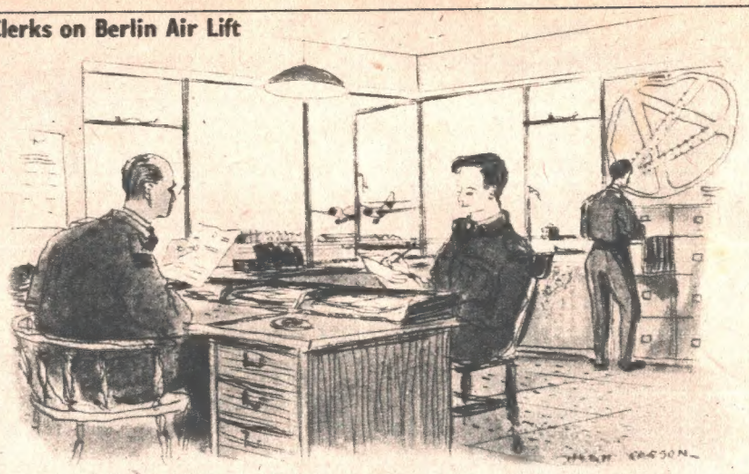

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EDITORIAL

Mystery Millions of Charity Tied up in Red Tape

THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS, who watch over trust funds founded to help the ill, or the helpless, or the family down on its luck, are today responsible for the huge sum of £114,480,321. But the greater part of this, if not the whole of it, lies unused and useless in the coffers of banks, or invested in safe securities —"dead" money.

The fact is that for a great many years there has been no investigation into the uses to which public charity funds are put. Meanwhile the funds have snowballed by over one hundred millions.

The accounts coming under the jurisdiction of the Commissioners now number as many as 73,292 against the 700 with which they began in 1858.

In many cases a charitable institution keeps the money it has collected in the bank or in the form of securities, and distributes to charity only the interest on that money. This means that a charity to which the public has, over the years, subscribed tens of thousands of pounds, distributes every year only about £30 for every £1,000 it holds—at three per cent this roughly amounts to the interest rate.

AND so the "dead" millions grow. Since 1938, alone, over £22,000,000 has collected in this way.

Many administrators of charity, who are sincere and well-meaning men, say they have allowed the money to accumulate in the cause of "sound finance."

This financial megalomania would meet with scant approval from the people who, for the best of human reasons, once gave their shillings and sixpences to the funds!

It would be wrong, though, to put the whole of the blame for the present situation on the Charity Commissioners alone.

For the Commissioners have no power to intervene so long as trust funds are properly administered. And many of the administrators of these trusts are lawyers — men who are chiefly concerned with "keeping the funds intact" (and, incidentally, in keeping their jobs as administrators).

SOME trusts administer charities which are as much as a century old.

Money which was once contributed to help the victims of a mining disaster, or to aid the wounded in a forgotten war, now lies dormant, simply because the purpose for which the funds were originally established has ceased to exist.

For example, there are trust funds set up in the last century to "help the aged." The annual income of such funds now totals £5,000,000—yet how much of this goes to help the old-age pensioners of the country, who, more than any other section of the community, today need "a few little extras"?

The greater part of this money is tied up in lawyers' red tape. Its expenditure is often limited to the aged poor born or living in certain specified parts of the country. Frequently the sums are dedicated to areas where there is now little population.

Outdated clauses in the wills of people long since dead direct that money should be spent to "provide doles of flour" or yearly alms for the aged in a particular village. The village may have only a few old people in it nowadays, while half a dozen miles away there may be a hundred aged and infirm folk to whom the distribution of a little money for baccy, beer, knitting wool, blankets, hot water bottles and a few luxuries, would be a blessing.

THE Charity Commissioners can only advise on the reallocation of funds to new charities if requested to do so by the trustees. Even then they are tied by an archaic ruling that the money can be applied only to "an identical cause." Which often means that it must be handed out in the same district. If no "identical cause" can be found, the money simply remains idle.

There is no lack of good causes to which the idle millions could be applied. But to get this "dead" money into circulation, Government action is necessary. The last Royal Commission to probe into the matter sat seventy years ago, and its inquiries were restricted to the London area. The limited effect of its work is shown by the enormous sums now lying idle.

IN the public interest what we now need is a large-scale investigation—nothing less than a new Royal Commission—to look into the disposal of these dormant millions, so that they may be freed to do the good work for which they were originally intended. The forthcoming debate on charities in the House of Lords should provide an opportunity for action.

And how badly it is needed!

We really want a completely new set of laws—with wide powers of discretion in their application—to free the hands of the many sincere trustees and administrators who at present are powerless to act because of antiquated rulings.

The principle of charity in Britain is a fine one. It must be upheld. There are hundreds of worthy causes to which charity funds could be applied. We cannot allow a situation to endure in which a known £114,000,000 (plus many more millions outside the jurisdiction of the Charity Commissioners) is held in the form of pieces of paper, or securities, while people in dire need of help get not so much as a penny.

JOHN BULL 186 HIGH HOLBORN LONDON W.C.1

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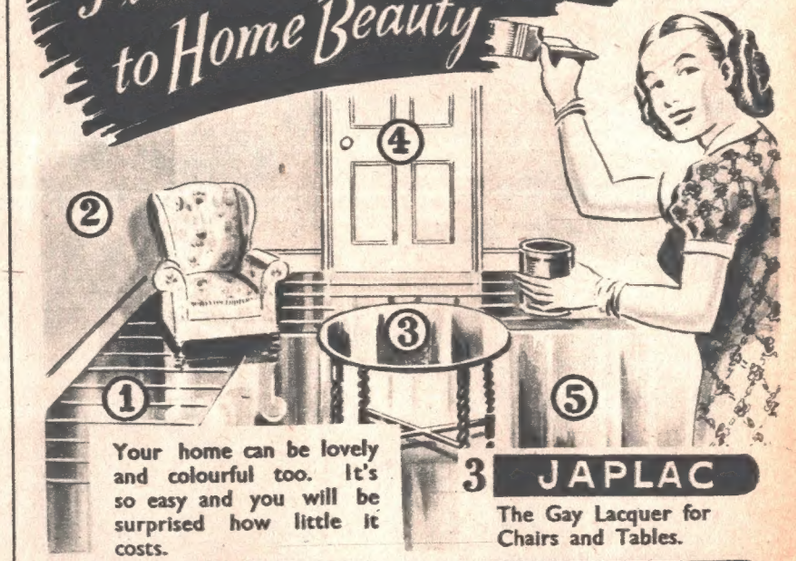

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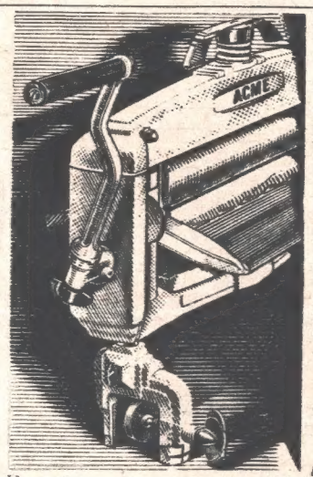

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THE OLIVIER STORY

by LEONARD WALLACE

Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh at home in Chelsea. Their romance has all the elements of a good film

Early days when he seemed rather a flop; the time Garbo spurned him as a screen lover on the set. . . . Beginnings of his fame; how he met and married Vivien Leigh

SIR LAURENCE OLIVIER scored a memorable personal triumph at the opening of the Old Vic's current season at the New Theatre in London.

It was not so much the crowds besieging the theatre before the first night of *The School for Scandal* or the much larger crowds afterwards, excited people of all ages who milled around the stage door, spilled deep into the street and had to be controlled by mounted police, as on a Command Performance night. The real triumph came at the close of the play.

To sustained cheering and clapping, the company, standing in a semi-circle, took a dozen curtain calls. The noise was almost deafening. Then Olivier took a small pace forward. The sound cut immediately to a dead silence.

It was a tribute infinitely greater than all the cheering.

To me this scene, climaxed by the speech that followed, quietly giving credit to everyone concerned in the production, was like an exclamation mark at the end of Olivier's long chapter of recent successes. Successes that I wouldn't have believed possible nearly twenty years ago.

Jack-in-the-box

In those days Olivier, as far as I was concerned as a critic and reporter, was something of a flop. I'd seen his early Hollywood films, turgid pieces like *Potiphar's Wife* and *The Yellow Ticket*. I had thought little or nothing of his chances for the future. He seemed in most of them to be like a jack-in-the-box in evening dress. Evidently Olivier shared my opinion of these pictures, for after appearing in less than half a dozen he departed for home with some very harsh words to the American Press about "art" as Hollywood saw it.

Then, in 1933, he was asked to return to Hollywood to play opposite Greta Garbo in *Queen Christina*. Garbo was at the height of her powers; this was more like a royal summons than an invitation. It was certainly something that Olivier, loathing the film city though he did, could not afford to ignore.

He was summoned to a preliminary test as soon as he arrived. A friend of mine who was a film technician in the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios in those days told me what happened then.

The major part of the test consisted of a "clinch" with Garbo. It was intended to be lingering and passionate. After, perhaps, five seconds, Garbo detached herself from young Laurence. "I vant Gilbert," she announced, and stalked off the set. She was referring to John Gilbert, her old screen partner, with whom, reputedly, she was in love.

Olivier was left standing.

There was nothing to be done. A contract with a comparatively unknown Englishman meant nothing against the whim of the great Garbo. Half humiliated and half scornful, Olivier left for

1930 Success is far off. In early films like *Too Many Crooks*, Olivier "seemed just a jack-in-the-box in evening dress"

1937 Film-soured Olivier is enticed back to films—and partners Vivien Leigh in *Fire Over England*. They fell in love

home again. It was another failure to add to the list which thus far made a considerably more impressive, or depressing, total than his successes. He could already write off to experience the earlier Hollywood excursion, at the recollection of which he still shudders, and upwards of twenty plays, most of which barely struggled beyond a month's run.

His record over this period was a six-weeks' appearance in a thriller, *Murder on the Second Floor*, on Broadway, where he had gone to join his fiancée, Jill Esmond. He had even stepped out of *Journey's End*, in which he had played Stanhope to the approval of both critics and public, in order to appear in the stage version of *Beau Geste*, which hardly ran at all.

Bad luck, impetuous judgment and perhaps an overmastering impatience to succeed were reasons enough for the difficulties and disappointments of these years. He was then a very different person from the intensively schooled actor-producer of today.

Scorned Conventions

Then he had little but his inner fire of conviction, unchannelled by discipline, and perhaps too much of an ambitious young man's contempt for the established conventions and habits of his craft.

His exuberance and vitality enabled him to rise above these failures—not always without bitterness—but always with an undefeated spirit. He wove them to some advantage into the complex pattern of a life during the course of which he has been a matinée idol in Noel Coward comedies, a film star with three separate careers, two in Hollywood and one in England, an actor-manager in London, New York, Australia and other countries, a governor of the Old Vic and a producer-director-actor in yet a fourth screen career.

It hasn't been bad going for a country parson's son who had his first taste of the theatre in a schoolboy show at Stratford-on-Avon as Katharine in *The Taming of the Shrew*. A little more than twenty years after that event he was described by J. Arthur Rank, in the announcement that he would film *Hamlet*, as "this man of great stature," and a few months afterwards he was knighted.

Olivier's talents, so often in the early years dissipated in misdirected exuberance, began to acquire discipline and direction in the years immediately preceding the war, soon after he made his first acquaintance with the Old Vic. Its pattern began to crystallize. Then came his romance and marriage to Vivien Leigh, his war service in the Fleet Air Arm and his subsequent triumphs on stage and screen. All seem to have deepened and enriched that pattern.

The Bell-presser

He began by "barnstorming" in a small repertory company owned by Ellen Terry's daughter, Edith Craig. He was rarely allowed to act. Generally he stood by as understudy to almost every male member of the company. He was also assistant manager; his most responsible duty was to press the interval bell on time.

His need to act took him to another and smaller touring company for which he actually appeared on the stage for two pounds ten a week. This company he still refers to as the "lavatory theatre," because in remote districts it was often necessary for the company to use the public accommodation as dressing-rooms.

He was about seventeen at this time, broodingly handsome, full of vitality, deeply impressed with the romance and eloquence of period plays. During this state of apprenticeship he played Byron, Henry IV, Henry VIII, Macbeth, Tennyson's Harolde, Petruchio and, for contrast, West Country wiseacres in Eden Phillpotts's pieces and symbolic figures in modernistic plays like *The Adding Machine*.

They were all done within the orbit of the "little theatre"—and all done with physical violence and sheer relish of the power of a magnificent voice; overplayed with a gusto which suggested that the young man was determined to batter and bombast his way forward.

In these days he collected the earliest of the many scars and dislocations that have physiologically marked his acting career. He would never step through a gateway when he could leap a balcony. Once he fractured both ankles during one of these bounds.

The disposition to violence persists, even in the mature Olivier. During the filming of the duel scene in *Hamlet*, the ferocity of his attack caused the less skilled Terence Morgan, playing Laertes, to take a sizable sliver off his chest; and earlier in the production he had twisted his foot in scaling the castle stairs too impetuously.

During his Australian Old Vic tour he damaged his leg on the stage. But he preserves a sense of proportion about this likeable weakness. When asked on his return from Australia exactly how the accident happened he replied dryly, "Oh, I was 'hamming' again."

But these days his immense energy is mainly reserved for his labours as a producer. Those closest to him during the five-months' filming of *Hamlet* still tell me with awe of his intense power of concentration, of the weeks he spent with Alan Dent tailoring Shakespeare to suit film audiences, of the thrust-by-thrust working out of the duel scene, of the many and sudden switches from casting and costume conferences to technical discussions with cheerful cameraman Desmond Dickinson.

"Dickie," although an artist in his own line, is the most matter-of-fact worker you could find in any studio. Many people thought that he and Olivier would just not get along. They were wrong. "Dickie" settled down admirably with Olivier and the result was that brilliant deep-focus photography which so many other camera specialists envy.

What Gertie Would Like

It was Dickinson who invented "Gertie in the ninepennies," a mythical picture-goer whose decisions on problems of taste and treatment were generally accepted as final. "What would Gertie say about this one?" Olivier would ask when he had worked out a camera set-up to his own liking.

This disposes of the fiction that Olivier is highbrow.

In fact, he detests any sort of affectation and is quick to deflate it. During the filming of the players' scene in *Hamlet*, an athletic performer playing one of the tumblers made a great, unnecessary show between rehearsals of limbering up and running through the somersaults and cartwheels he was to do in the scene. Olivier watched him once or twice—with growing impatience.

Then he casually strolled to that corner of the set and as casually performed the man's complete routine in front of him, ending up next to the assistant director, with whom he began a conversation as though nothing had happened. The acrobat never showed off again.

Told off for Shouting

Olivier's own showing off has always been done on the stage as part of his performance.

Sometimes this vitality has received triumphant justification. The critics condemned him for shouting in his performance as Romeo in Gielgud's production of *Romeo and Juliet* and of ranting during his first portrayal of *Hamlet* for the Old Vic. But on each occasion the public took him to their hearts. His Hamlet was the beginning of the revitalization of the Old Vic.

He overdid it, though, when he played *Oedipus Rex* with special make-up that enabled his eyes to stream with blood during the blinding scene. Before the opening night Olivier told the theatre manager with some relish that he had better have a bottle of brandy in the house, since women fainted at this spectacle.

His interviews consist almost entirely of a monologue by the journalist interspersed with periodic grunts of assent or dissent from Olivier. He doesn't talk like a genius—in fact he doesn't talk at all if he can avoid it. I have felt during conversations with him that most questions I might raise have already been thrashed out in his mind and dismissed as settled long since.

He does things, but seldom dissects them—and hasn't much use for critics. He has a healthy intolerance of everything that falls outside his chosen scheme of activity.

Once, when a London critic showed

1943 A Fleet Air Arm officer, but with time off to film *The Demi Paradise*. A mature actor now, with well-disciplined talents

1949 A knight, producer-director-actor; Olivier and Vivien Leigh acknowledge success at first night of *The School for Scandal*

him a penetrating piece of writing by the American reviewer John Mason Brown, he read it, grinned approval and muttered, "There may be something in your damned profession after all."

Although he was never a man to suffer fools gladly, it is not necessarily rudeness which prompts that kind of remark. It is simply that he just does not see why he should be bothered by anything that he is not vitally interested in. All his energies are absorbed in the main purpose of his life.

With close friends it is rather different. Away from his work he is unaffected, given when possible to swimming and gardening. He does not mind talking about the weather, food, drink, animals, gardens and books-I-have-recently-read. But even close friends can't rouse him on politics.

In fact, off stage he is a normal soul—even simple—and he resents being taken for a highbrow with wittily documented views on anything and everything.

Off duty he generally spends his evenings quietly in his Chelsea cottage, sipping whisky and listening to the music of such composers as Beethoven, Bach, Brahms, and especially of his favourite, Handel. He likes supper at home with his wife, Vivien Leigh, an intimate husband-and-wife conversation and a good wine to add to the mellowness of it all.

Real-life Romance

His second marriage is almost ideally happy. His meeting with Vivien Leigh and the development of the romance between them is the kind of story that might itself make a good film.

His first marriage was also a happy one. Jill Esmond was a competent stage actress who, when they became engaged, was rather more successful than he. Early in the thirties he made a trip to the United States to be with her; they were good friends as well as in love with each other. The friendship remained even when the terrific attraction between Olivier and Vivien Leigh blazed up.

Vivien's husband, too, was an understanding and charming person—a barrister, Leigh Holman. When it was obvious that Olivier and Vivien were destined for each other all four parties recognized the fact without bitterness.

Vivien Leigh and Olivier had met socially, but it was not until he was embarked upon his first British film career that they were thrown together in circumstances which made their falling in love almost inevitable.

Coaxed Back into Films

It was in the mid-thirties, when Alexanda Korda was the bright star of British film production, after his world success with *The Private Life of Henry VIII* had given the British industry a new sense of importance.

Korda was always a shrewd star-maker. He tempted Olivier into his fold. Even the film-soured Olivier, who regarded Hollywood as something rather in the nature of a gilded pigsty, could scarcely refuse to make pictures for a man who had already coaxed Douglas Fairbanks, senior, Leslie Howard and Ralph Richardson to work for him.

Olivier found these British studios suited him better than those of Hollywood.

He was able to shun the spotlight and publicists found him a difficult star to bend to their wishes. It is doubtful if Olivier felt anything but reserve regarding films—the sting of his Hollywood experiences was still too clear in his mind. But one day he was given a leading part in *Fire Over England*, in which Flora Robson played Queen Elizabeth and Vivien Leigh the astonishingly beautiful heroine.

Vivien just then was on the crest of the wave that had swept her to sudden popularity and had made her overnight the darling of the critics. It was just after she had appeared on the stage in *The Mask of Virtue*, receiving sensational notices.

Korda had quickly given her a contract. So there was *Fire Over England*, with Vivien brilliantly beautiful, and Olivier rugged and darkly handsome—almost as dashing as Fairbanks in his heyday. And the very scenes they played together conspired to fan their mutual attraction.

In the world of the theatre, too, their paths coincided, for Vivien was one of the company which Olivier led to Denmark to put on *Hamlet* at Elsinore. What a setting for two theatrical people in love!

In 1939 they went to New York, where they played in *Romeo and Juliet*—something of a flop—and in *No Time for Comedy*.

By this time the small informed world of theatre and film knew that they were completely in love. Then Hollywood made overtures. Selznick wanted Vivien for *Gone With the Wind*. William Wyler believed that Olivier was the only man to play Heathcliff in his forthcoming version of *Wuthering Heights*.

They went, Olivier as much to be with Vivien as to work in a town which he had found so uncongenial. When they arrived Selznick was already well into production of his mammoth film. One night they went with him to see the shooting of sequences of the burning of the town of Atlanta.

It was a magnificent spectacle and Vivien thrilled to it. Against the firelight her eyes glowed and her hair streamed in the wind.

"I never saw her so beautiful," said Olivier long afterwards. "I knew then that she must get the part." Selznick knew it, too.

Double Success and Marriage

The picture made Vivien a star of world repute; and Olivier himself did not do so badly. He found in Wyler a congenial spirit. He admired the director's work and gave him a magnificent performance. Not only that, but he stayed to make other films. And he never forgot what he learned from Wyler. When filming *Hamlet* Olivier used much of what he then learned of direction. He freely acknowledged that Wyler was his inspiration.

Olivier and Vivien were married, very quietly, in California, as soon as their respective divorces had worked out their legal limits.

The happy marriage is one of the oldest of film and stage publicity conventions. A phoney picture of domestic bliss and unparalleled affinity is put out to the public right up to the moment when the divorce proceedings begin. But with Olivier and Leigh it isn't a convention and it isn't phoney. They just do feel that way about each other.

Their marriage has proved almost novelettishly successful. Nearly seven years after it happened the couple were behaving like youngsters in the throes of first love.

When Olivier was putting on *King Lear* at the New Theatre in September, 1946, he rehearsed into the late night, but when he arrived home Vivien would always be sitting up in the Chelsea cottage ready to have supper with him in the small hours. On the first night she hurried round from the Piccadilly Theatre, where she was appearing in *The Skin of Our Teeth*, for the final few minutes of the show, just to watch his last acting moments and to see him take his curtain.

Their Weekend Retreat

At weekends and between professional commitments the Oliviers go to their country place, Notley Abbey, where they live in the abbey house of a monastery that was destroyed by Henry VIII. It is a quiet retreat—that is the correct word in this instance—and Vivien spent a good deal of time there when she was recuperating from a serious illness.

Few guests go to Notley and those who do are chosen from a close circle of friends and kindred spirits—producers or directors such as William Wyler and Garson Kanin, actors such as Ralph Richardson and David Niven.

Those who do go find Olivier a charming and perhaps unexpectedly thoughtful host. They can also amuse themselves by browsing through the collection of theatrical treasures housed there—hundreds of volumes of plays, Macready's make-up box and Kean's sword used in his portrayal of Richard III are among them.

Kean's sword was presented by John Gielgud in recognition of Olivier's performance of the same character — a tribute from one fine actor to another.

NEXT WEEK: Olivier's partnership with Ralph Richardson; his Australian tour; his idea of what success should really mean

They were all there, trying to slap him on the back and shake his hand simultaneously. For a moment, the shock left Mr. Packard speechless

THE HAUNTED MEADOW

by W. A. POWERS

ILLUSTRATED BY K. J. PETTS

WILLIAM PACKARD'S PUB, the "Running Pheasant," stands across the main street from the post office in the village of Little Waddlingford, in Cambridgeshire.

In most ways the "Running Pheasant" is a completely average English public house with low eaves, a high sloping roof, and low, oak-beamed ceilings. No one—except perhaps some of its most devoted regulars from the village—would call it the best example of a late eighteenth-century pub, and yet no one would term it the poorest. From its polished, brass-topped, walnut-handled beer pulls to its serried bottles, dartboard, and the fox's mask that hangs above the main door, it is typical of dozens of country pubs.

Some distinction, it is true, is contributed by the row of carefully executed sailing ship models that line the top shelf behind the bar, and the coloured, gilt framed engraving of Nelson as a midshipman that hangs as a centrepiece beneath them. In an inland village in the heart of the East Anglia farming region you don't normally expect to find such nautical embellishments.

Yet they are easily explained once you learn that Mr. Packard, the publican, is a pensioned petty officer who spent over forty years in the Royal Navy. What isn't so easy to explain is one of the items, propped against the lacquered hull of the ship *Victory*, that forms a part of the "Running Pheasant's" collection of war mementos.

As with all public houses that were located near a military establishment during the war, the "Running Pheasant" was often given souvenirs by the troops who drank there. Whenever he received one, Mr. Packard always proudly fastened it with a shoemaker's brad either to the bottle shelves or to the low-hanging oak beams above the bar.

In time he had an impressive array of British, American, French and Polish regimental badges and emblems of rank, and many a postwar visitor has been regaled with the stories behind a commando knife that was carried in the attack on Dieppe, a German Iron Cross taken from a prisoner at Arnhem, and a hunting horn which was found hanging from the turret of a knocked-out British tank at Knightsbridge, in the Western Desert.

Mr. Packard is as proud of each one of them as he is of his collection of ship models, and never tires of pointing them out to newcomers or telling how he came to receive them.

THE souvenir that stands against the hull of Nelson's *Victory*, however, is never mentioned. Strangers who notice it and happen to call attention to it are probably struck by Mr. Packard's sudden lack of expansiveness and by his intense preoccupation with some glasses he has just finished polishing at the opposite end of the bar.

Even most of the villagers are uncertain of its origin or significance. They know it first appeared after an illness with which Mr. Packard came down on Hallow-e'en of 1948, and which Doctor Dalrymple described as a recurrence of a fever he had contracted while serving in the Far East; but that is all.

The few who know more can scarcely look on the "Running Pheasant" as just an ordinary public house.

When the news first came, early in 1942, that the airfield four miles outside the village was to be taken over by an American bomber group, everyone wondered what it was going to be like to have the village overrun by swarms of strange airmen. Mr. Packard, who had never seen any Americans except occasional prewar tourists, had his doubts about how they would mix with his regular customers, or, more particularly, how his regular customers would mix with them.

Secretly he rather hoped that the Americans would overlook the village

Plainly, it had been an hallucination. All he had to do to convince himself was return to the bar and find everything as before. That, surely, would be proof enough

and be drawn to the market town, which was eight miles in the opposite direction from the field and boasted three cinemas and a dance hall.

With most of the Americans this turned out to be the case, but the crew of the *Lambsie Divey*, as they called their bomber, had found the "Running Pheasant" during their first pass from the field and soon became regular visitors.

Mr. Packard remembered well the night they first appeared and took their seats at the corner table, talking and joking among themselves in their strange and strident jargon.

Often he recalled how noisy and young they had sounded that night. Later he had grown more used to it, or perhaps they actually had become more subdued and lost some of their brashness as they began to see more experience.

But when he first saw them he couldn't help thinking what a strange lot they were, completely alien in dress, speech and manner to anything that had ever been seen in the village. His regular customers, too, he noticed, looked a bit askance and glanced with all too evident misgiving at the table in the corner, and talked even more quietly among themselves than they usually did.

That the regulars should feel resentment over the intrusion of the Americans was only natural. For years they had looked on the "Running Pheasant" as something of their own, a place where they could meet, gossip, quietly reminisce, and casually carry on their bitter feuds at darts.

These began every night with the arrival of Mr. Halloran, the butcher, and continued until closing time. Every evening the tournament began in the same way; it had become almost a ritual. Mr. Halloran would arrive shortly after eight o'clock, say his good evenings, and order a pint of bitter. No mention of darts was ever made until he had slowly drained his glass.

"Well, boys," he would say then, wiping and smoothing his moustache with the inside of his thumb, "who's ready for a go at the board?"

That was the signal for Mr. Packard to snap on the corner light above the dart board and for all the regulars to retire to the end of the room to be either spectators or competitors in the evening's match.

The first night the crew of the *Lambsie Divey* came in, young Moe, from Brooklyn, broke the tradition of years by exclaiming, even before the top foam on Mr. Halloran's beer had settled: "Hey, what do you know? They've got a dart board in the joint!" Then, turning towards the bar, he asked: "Any of you guys ever play this game? I used to be champion of the Greenpoint Police Athletic League."

The regulars, all of whom were expert darts players, received the remark in silence. All eyes unconsciously sought out Mr. Halloran in the same manner that lesser prelates might turn towards an archbishop as being best fitted to reply to the attack of an infidel. Mr. Halloran was recognized not only as dean of all dart playing matters but also as general spokesman for the village on all subjects from the right of way in certain fields to its choice of representatives for the county council.

While everyone watched him, Mr. Halloran slowly drained his pint and deliberately smoothed his moustache.

Then he turned to the others at the bar and said: "Come on, boys, let's give the Yanks a game. Two of them and two of us to a side."

That was the start of the friendship that sprang up between the regulars of the "Running Pheasant" and the Americans. Had Mr. Halloran reacted in any other way, they might never have got along at all, but by giving his benediction to it the acquaintanceship became rapid and sure. Every evening they were free, the five Americans—Moe, Hank, Lanny, Tex and Pete—came either together or separately to the pub, and soon everyone came to know and accept them as if they had lived in Little Waddlingford all their lives.

They were invited to Sunday dinners. They taught the children baseball or tried to master the intricacies of cricket. And on Saturday nights they practically took over the dance at the community hall.

Bit by bit the strangeness of their speech and manner became more imperceptible. The village itself, especially the children, came to pick up some of their slang and customs, and nights when they couldn't get away from the field or were off on a raid both Mr. Packard and the regulars missed their youthful gaiety and high spirits.

The last visit the crew of the *Lambsie Divey* paid the "Running Pheasant" was two nights before Hallow-e'en in 1943. That night and Hallow-e'en itself were dates that Mr. Packard could never forget, even though his memory had become hazy about many more widely known events of the war.

It was bitterly cold, and the boys had arrived late, after all the regulars had said an early good night. When they came in, Mr. Packard served them in the small private bar, where a fire was still burning. He remembered clearly the excited spirits they were in as a result of a successful raid on Düsseldorf that morning.

As they took their places at the table near the fire Tex started the banter which had become almost their trade mark.

"Barman," he said in his slow voice, "what have you got that's fit for the best tail gunner in the Air Force?"

And Lanny, who came from Wisconsin, replied: "Give him some beer from Milwaukee, Packy. We're not too proud to let Texas foreigners drink it."

"Would you settle for a pint of mild and bitter?" asked Mr. Packard.

"That swill!" said Hank. "Why, in Kansas we wash our hogs in better brew than that."

"Yeah, Packy," added Moe. "When are you guys going to learn to make something a civilized man can drink? Three or four hundred years old, this burg must be, and still you don't know what good beer is."

"Make it five, Packy," said Pete, who was the quietest of the lot, and while Mr. Packard went behind the bar to draw the pints the raillery continued.

"When in Rome," Lanny said, "I guess we got to do what the Romans do, but maybe I won't be glad to get back to the States and a good cold glass of beer!"

"Me," added Hank, "come the peace, I'm going to start exporting ice to England. I'll get a big, seagoing tugboat from Navy surplus and drag whole icebergs over from Greenland."

"And I'll put juke boxes on them," said Moe. "Thousands of juke boxes and pinball machines. If the boys back in Greenpoint only knew what I'm going through!"

It was the same pattern that their talk took every night, and Mr. Packard was always amused by its pace and lightness. The secret, he knew, was never to take them seriously. After he had served the five pints of mild and bitter, he drew another for himself and joined them at the table.

"Hey, Sarge!" exclaimed Lanny, as soon as Mr. Packard was seated. "What about throwing a Hallow-e'en party for all the kids—the same as we used to have at home? They've probably never seen a real Hallow-e'en in their lives."

"Sounds like a good idea," replied Pete. "When does it happen?"

"Night after tomorrow," said Lanny. "We're sure to have a pass that night. We can get apples and pumpkins from the field, there's plenty of candy in the PX, and we can get one of the cooks to whip us up a half dozen pies."

The idea caught on at once, and they all joined immediately in the planning. Lanny promised to put on a ghost act with a sheet and some phosphorescent paint, Tex said he would bring his guitar and sing cowboy songs, and Hank vowed he would tell some stories that would keep them all awake for a week.

Mr. Packard, for his part, offered to turn over his back storeroom for the occasion and to have old Luke, the thatcher, decorate it with cornstalks and pumpkins.

It was long past closing time when all their plans were finally made. The boys were determined to make it the biggest treat the kids had ever seen and promised to come in from the field as soon as their passes were granted.

As they piled into their jeep, which was parked in front of the door, they called back their familiar good nights. "So long, Packy! Thanks for the beer." . . . "Don't forget that juke box!" . . . "For a Limey, you're an O.K. guy!" . . . "Don't take any wooden nickels! . . . "We'll be seeing you, Packy!"

Then they started off into the night, and that was the last time that Mr. Packard or any of the village saw them.

Two mornings later, while the frost was still thick on the frozen October ground, everyone in Little Waddlingford knew that a big American raid was about to come off. At four in the morning the village was awakened by the coughing and roar of the giant engines as the planes warmed up and taxied from one end of the field to the other.

By five thirty Mr. Packard had counted 144 separate take-offs—more than had ever left the field on a single mission. Something special was on, he knew, and the *Lambsie Divey* was almost certain to be taking part.

Nearly all that day the American planes were away and the air was heavy and still with their absence. Everyone was conscious that a raid of exceptional proportions was on, yet no one ventured to speak of it.

A hush hung over the village, as though it were a house where a patient lay dangerously ill. Mr. Packard busied himself quietly with preparations for the party, trying his best to forget the raid. He saw the schoolmaster about gathering the children, had Mrs. Beecher clear out the back storeroom, and arranged with old Luke to have him and his helper decorate it with cornstalks and pumpkins.

It was almost mid afternoon when the first of the planes began to return. First, four orderly flights of twelve arrived, then groups of eight and ten, and during the next half hour broken flights of six, four and three.

Without speaking of the figures, the village kept tally of the arrivals as surely as they did the runs at a county cricket match. By four thirty Mr. Packard had counter 129. Some of the planes, he knew, might have made emergency landings at fields somewhere in the south.

If the *Lambsie Divey* was among them, he hoped the field wouldn't be too distant for the boys to be driven up to Little Waddlingford in time for the party.

He knew they were looking forward to it and would have as much fun at it as the children themselves.

Complete darkness came at five, and with it a light autumn fog. As he approached the "Running Pheasant" from his last errand, Mr. Packard saw an American jeep parked close to the door.

His first thought was that the boys hadn't been included in the mission or had arrived back early, but then he recognized the driver as a soldier to whom they had once introduced him.

"Evening, Mr. Packard," the boy called out. "Great weather for ducks and owls."

"Good evening," replied Mr. Packard. "Seems as though you lads have been having a day of it."

"One of the biggest yet. Bremerhaven caught it this time."

"How has the *Lambsie Divey* made out?"

"A wireless message came just as I was leaving the control room saying she'd crossed the coast. They're expecting her in any minute now. She's only flying on three engines, but she waved off landing at the emergency field in Suffolk. Said she had enough gas to make it home O.K."

"Rather a bad night for landing, isn't it?" asked Mr. Packard.

"Their skipper can put that crate down anywhere. This is duck soup. Wait a minute . . . that sounds like them now!"

Although the fog by now was so thick overhead that it was scarcely possible to see the treetops, Mr. Packard unconsciously looked upwards. At first he could hear nothing. Then, all at once, he caught the muffled but unmistakable sound of engines that seemed to be approaching the village from the direction of the coast.

He became aware, as the noise grew stronger, that, instead of being a steady, even roar, it had a rising and falling pulsation which he knew meant a plane flying on three engines.

"That's them all right," said the soldier at his side. "There's no mistaking that knocked-out engine."

For a while the noise maintained a steady intensity and it was impossible to tell how far off it was, or even whether it was getting stronger or fainter. Then, without warning, the sound leaped to a crescendo of thunder and the plane seemed to rush directly over their heads, becoming lost to the north almost as suddenly as it had approached. When they next picked up the sound of the engines it seemed to be off to the west in the direction of the field.

"He's probably circling," explained the soldier, "waiting for them to talk

him in. They've got these fog landings down to a science now."

But during the next fifteen minutes the big plane continued to circle tantalizingly and unseen overhead, presenting to those listening on the ground only a huge and varying orb of sound. One segment of its course brought it directly over the village, where the roar of the labouring engines seemed to transfer itself into a trembling of the ground. Then the noise would soften and become lost in the night as the plane travelled off to the north and the west for another approach.

Even though the quietly spoken reassurances of the soldier beside him kept Mr. Packard's spirits up, he couldn't help worrying a bit about the aimless, merry-go-round monotony and suspense as the giant machine thundered through the darkness.

When it happened, it came as suddenly and stingingly as the crack of a bull whip.

"Oh, oh!" said the figure at Mr. Packard's side. "Something's up. One of the other engines is coughing."

A break in the set cadence of the plane's engines could plainly be heard, and the next moment the bomber, with fire shooting from one exhaust, seemed to hurtle over their heads at almost roof-top height.

Even before the noise of the explosion reached them, the great flash from the direction of Four Acre Meadow reflected itself in every window on the north side of the village. Mr. Packard remembered later that he had been able to read the inn sign over his head by it, and saw the sign quiver, as though from a sudden gust of wind, when the sound of the blast itself came.

In scarcely more than a minute it was all over save for the crackling fire on the horizon, and the darkness that followed seemed deeper and blacker than anything the village had ever known. There was a personalness to the loss, as though some part of the village had been destroyed as well.

The next day a small white In Memoriam cross with the boys' names on it was put up to one side of the bomber's charred and twisted remains. A piece of the nose with the plane's name on it had been hurled clear of the wreckage, and someone propped it against the foot of the cross—a torn piece of aluminium with the words *Lambsie Divey* and the figure of a small gambolling lamb still discernible across its face.

OFTEN during the months that followed, Mr. Packard walked by the spot and thought how much better it would have been if, rather than listing the boys by their official ranks, names and initials, the marker merely said: "This is for Hank, Moe, Lanny, Tex and Pete—five Yanks who gave their lives for their country and the world."

It was by those names that the village had known them and would always remember them.

On his walks he would stop a few minutes at the cross, either to pluck weeds from the grass around it or to readjust the aluminium nose covering, which no one had ever removed. Having known the boys better than anyone else in the village, Mr. Packard looked on the cross as his own responsibility. Scarcely a week went by that he didn't pay at least one visit to the scene of the crash, but after Hallow-e'en of 1948 the village noticed that his visits suddenly stopped and that, when he did take a walk, it was always in a direction other than Four Acre Meadow.

In most ways Hallow-e'en of 1948 had been a normal night at the "Running Pheasant." No one who saw Mr. Packard noticed any sign of illness or a trace of the fever that had him closeted under Doctor Dalrymple's care for the next three weeks. There were a few customers in before supper, then a lull, and at seven thirty most of the regulars turned up, as they usually did. Mr. Halloran came at his usual time, had his usual pint of bitter, and in his usual manner suggested a game of darts.

"I wonder, madam, would you be so good, if you should happen to see one of the keepers . . ."

While the match was in progress Doctor Dalrymple, who was only a rare visitor, came in, and Mr. Packard joined him in a tot of whisky.

For a time they talked of the children's party five years before and of the plane crash which happened the same evening.

It was the first time in a long while that the loss of the *Lambsie Divey* had been mentioned, and while they were talking about it the night came back to Mr. Packard in all its detail. During the course of their conversation he had two or three whiskies with the doctor, but there was really nothing in that which could be held responsible for what occurred later on.

When the dart game was finished, all the regulars retired to the small room with the fire, and the conversation, because it was Hallow-e'en, worked its way around to the subject of spirits, ghosts and apparitions.

Among the farmers of the region there was a great deal of superstition and folklore, and for most of them the spirit world was a very real thing. Mr. Packard was always interested and amused by their stories of sights they claimed to have seen in the fields outside the village, but, even with his seagoing background, he never put the slightest stock in what they said.

"If there were such things as spirits," he often remarked, "surely a man would have seen one in sixty-three years of living and travelling."

For a long while Doctor Dalrymple kept them all interested by recounting some of the more historic fantasies—of ghosts that were reported generation after generation in certain castles and houses, of the white horse that in one night galloped from Land's End to John o' Groats, with his actual hoof marks being discovered the next day at several points along the route, and of the several separate witnesses who had reported hearing Drake's drum being beaten along the Channel during the evacuation from Dunkirk.

The supernatural was one of the doctor's favourite studies, but, while Mr. Packard listened with interest to all he said, it didn't lessen his disbelief in the slightest.

He had never seen a ghost or anything that passed beyond the realm of reality in all his sixty-three years and, until he did, he would continue to think of the whole subject as being nothing but the sheerest fiction.

AT ten o'clock Mr. Packard called out his customary: "Time, please, gentlemen! Time!" and the men finished their drinks, said their good nights, and in small groups or separately started for home.

The usual routine at this hour was for Mr. Packard to close up the bar, bolt the door, and then retire to his bedroom upstairs. Tonight, however, when the last table was cleared and the last glass polished, he didn't feel in the mood for sleep. Whisky, when he had more than his customary one or two of an evening, always tended to leave him a bit sleepless. Instead of bolting the door, he took his old Navy greatcoat from the peg on the hall wall and set out for half an hour's walk.

The night outside was cold and clear, with the full moon just rising in the sky. Despite the briskness of the air, it was a good night for walking, and Mr. Packard puffed contentedly on his pipe as he strode out towards the end of the village.

When he started, he had no preconceived plan or notion of where or even in what direction he would walk, but after ten minutes he noticed he was crossing Four Acre Meadow and heading towards the copse at the far side. Doctor Dalrymple, he thought, would probably say that what led him there was some sort of reflex action of the unconscious, evolving from their conversation earlier in the evening.

Whatever it was, he could see no harm in taking another look at the cross and paying his respects to the Yanks on the anniversary of their crash.

It was while he was still in the middle of Four Acre Meadow that the first irregularity of the evening occurred. With the copse still a hundred yards away, Mr. Packard suddenly began to hear the unmistakable rising and falling sound of voices in the distance.

That in itself was odd enough, as the people of the village and the neighbouring farms were early retirers and few were ever abroad at that time of night.

At first he thought that possibly a gipsy caravan was camped in the shelter of the copse for the night. Several had passed through the village during the previous two weeks on their way south for the winter.

But, as he approached closer and the voices became clearer, Mr. Packard knew definitely that they were not gipsies. The accents were indisputably American, yet there hadn't been an American in the district since the airfield closed down shortly after the end of the war.

If Mr. Packard had been a superstitious man, he no doubt would have turned back right then and there, and spread the news that the copse was haunted.

That was the way, he told himself, all those daft tales of the supernatural got their start. The only thing to do was to investigate the matter to its fullest and find the logical answer and explanation—which probably would be a simple one. It wasn't at all impossible that the voices came from some Americans on a camping trip. Of course, it was hardly the season to be camping, but Americans, especially American tourists, were always doing odd and unseasonable things.

Or it might be a group of deserters.

As he approached closer, he thought he heard something that rattled—not at all an eerie rattle, but something quite familiar which at the moment he couldn't quite identify.

Then a voice called: "Come on, you sixey! Baby needs new shoes! O, you eighty from Dakatie!"

This was answered by another voice, which remarked: "Five bucks says you don't!"

Then the first replied: "You're covered. Come on now, you sixey!"

It was five years—five years and two days—since they had said goodbye to him outside the "Running Pheasant," but there was no mistaking the voices of Tex and Moe.

By this time Mr. Packard was at the edge of the copse, scarcely thirty feet from where the plane had crashed and where the single white cross shone in the moonlight. Even at that distance, he could make out five figures in sheepskin boots, leather flying jackets, and long-peaked caps.

They were all there—Tex and Moe playing craps, Hank and Lanny lounging on their backs, and Pete sitting with his arms on his knees.

HANK spied him first. "There's old Packy!" he cried.

Immediately they all jumped to their feet and ran towards him, all trying to clap him on the back and shake his hand simultaneously.

"Hi, Packy!" shouted Tex. "It sure is good to see you."

"We were beginning to think you were never coming," said Lanny.

"Sorry we couldn't make the party," added Pete. "For a while there I thought we were going to crack right into the 'Running Pheasant.'"

"That really would have been the pay-off," said Hank. "Especially when it was just because of the kids that we didn't put down at that field in Suffolk."

"Hey, Packy!" asked Moe, "what ever happened to the Scots Land Army girl that used to come to the dances? What a number she was!"

For a time the overwhelming surprise

Continued on page 18

HATER HECHT

by CLAUD MORRIS

Irresponsible, obsessed—and disowned by Jews in authority. Yet his campaign against Britain still brings us new enemies daily

The trouble is that many Americans *will* take Ben Hecht seriously

THE TAXIMAN WHO PICKED me up in Times Square a few weeks ago threw back at me a copy of the *New York Post*. Emblazoned across the front page were the words: "Bevin, Britain's Bloodthirsty Blunderer."

In the *New York Star* I read: "Despite recognition of Israel, British arms shipments to Egypt in the past few months have mounted to £50,000,000. This is bound to affect the Marshall Plan itself. The American people do not intend to finance yet another new British war against Israel."

On Fifth Avenue, down 42nd Street, in fashionable clubs and humbler soda fountains, I learned what it is to be disliked because of your race. I have heard Britons called "Hitlerites," "Thugs" and "International Murderers." I have walked up 105th Street and seen a giant poster which showed a Jewish boy on his knees saying: "I Want to Live." In the background was a British soldier holding a grenade.

When I asked: "Isn't it high time you took that sort of thing down?" I got the answer: "Take it down? We may yet have to print some more."

On the streets I came across yellow Palestine Relief vans, loudspeakers howling: "Shut off European Recovery funds to Britain. No matter what her public manoeuvres, she is still out to prosecute her war on Israel and show that the United Nations is dead."

Here is bitterness without scruples; a propaganda campaign conducted on the theory that, the bigger the lie, the easier it is to swallow. Even after we have quit Palestine, even after we have given *de facto* recognition to the State of Israel, this campaign continues with ferocity and viciousness. Every day it brings us new enemies in America.

His Latest Cry

Behind the screaming, the atrocity stories and the lies is a man in his fifties who looks at first sight as though his clothes hadn't been pressed for some time and his buttons weren't all quite buttoned. His eyes are small and alive, his nose large, his hair thin, and his waist thick.

The name of this man, famous in his own country, notorious abroad, is Ben Hecht. To his cry of a month or so ago: "800,000 Jewish lives at stake in Palestine," he has now added the call: "A million additional Jewish lives at stake in Arab countries!"

He speaks of "Nazi England." To him the official Jewish movement, in Israel as well as in America, is too tame. He does not disguise his contempt for older men, people like the bearded Jewish prophet, Chaim Weizmann, now President of Israel, whose son died fighting with the R.A.F. and who speaks affectionately of Britain's help to the Jewish people in world affairs.

It was he who addressed to "The Terrorists of Palestine" the message: "Every time you blow up a British arsenal, or wreck a British jail, or send a British railroad sky high, or rob a British bank, or let go your guns and bombs at the British betrayers and invaders of your homeland, the Jews of America make a little holiday in their hearts."

I was surprised and shocked on my visit to America to find out just how many misguided people do "make a little holiday in their hearts" over any British misfortune. I have been surprised by the long term effects of the Hecht hate campaign. I have agreed with the New York newspaper man who said to me: "This man has made 3,000,000 enemies for Britain."

I have heard the still current echoes of Hecht's most successful fabrication: the story that, when Jews in Belsen in 1945 planned to protest against Bevin's policy in Palestine, British troops "under the leadership of a German Nazi" beat several women.

I went to Nyack, New York, where Ben Hecht has a beautiful 160-year-old white and green framed house. He sleeps in a comfortable Louis XV cradle bed, with an accordion by its side which he plays occasionally. A violin lies in the bathroom, on which he serenades himself as the mood takes him.

Why should a man like this, living the life of what most would call a rich, eccentric American writer, a man 4,000 miles away from the Britain he knows nothing of, and a safe 8,000 miles from the nearest Arab bullet, bother about stirring up international trouble?

Why does he take his typewriter every morning and finger the keys on the script of his latest film, *The Terrorists*, with which he hopes to justify to the world the Jewish extremists whom he would like to see dominate the new Israel? Why does his daughter, Jenny, four and a half years old, come in almost every day and ask: "What are the British up to today, Daddy?"

Proud of His Race

Part of the answer lies in Hecht's own life. He was born on one of the cross streets of the Lower East Side of New York, of Russian Jewish parents who in their day suffered all the agonies now endured by the displaced people of Europe. A Jew, he belonged to a race with no national homeland and no foreseeable future. He was a good Jew and, like all good Jews, he was proud of his imaginative, talented race.

Young Ben never liked the "squirmers" among the Jewish people, or the apologists who tried to anglicize their names from Cohen to Cowan. And he was brought up by a vigorous aunt.

When Ben was six his aunt crashed her umbrella down on the head of a theatre manager who made some offensive remark and then asked *her* to apologise. Outside in the street, she told Ben with a sunny smile: "Remember what I tell you. That's the right way to apologise." Ben never forgot. He was to carry the umbrella technique into later life.

He was ambitious, with a restless, questing ambition. At the age of twelve he was suddenly missed by his playmates in the Bowery. When next heard of he was appearing in spangled tights as an acrobat in a circus touring the Far West. From there he became a magician in a small-time variety show. Later on he was a violin player.

The Odd Man Out

He was seeing life, but this was clearly not the way up to fame. Ben got himself into a Chicago newspaper in a minor capacity and graduated to reporter. In that tough land of gangsters and molls, he learned how to attack with the pen. He became known as the champion of the underprivileged, the little guy.

Constantly fighting a losing battle in unpopular causes had its effect, however. Hecht began to develop something of a persecution complex: an obsession that maybe he was the odd man out, with everybody against him.

Once he was hauled into a Chicago court for writing an obscene book—a book that helped to make him famous. Things were going badly. Finally, in an effort to save the day, his lawyer, Clarence Darrow, went in to defend him. Summing up Hecht's case with a plea for sympathy, Darrow said, pointing to Ben: "And this poor, unfortunate man. . . ." Hecht shouted at Darrow: "Now even my own lawyer turns against me!"

As a writer, he found success, perhaps too quickly. Book followed book. He wrote *The Front Page*, the play and then

the movie. He turned out one of the first talkie classics: *Scarface*. His brilliant typewriter had the success formula of a continuing string of films.

Money didn't matter; monetary success didn't satisfy the yearning inside him. He tore up a contract with Sam Goldwyn for a guaranteed $50,000 a year just for two ideas, only one of which had to be accepted.

What he craved for was power. He wanted to lead a cause; but he had not found one. Then, one night at a New York dinner, a man at his elbow suddenly started talking offensively about Zionists and Jews. He turned to look at Hecht, realized who he was, and shut up, as all such men shut up, like a clam.

But the prejudice of an unknown diner had given Ben an enemy made to order. The enemy: anyone, anywhere, who attacked Jews or thwarted their national aspirations.

At the end of the war, Britain appeared to him to be standing in the way of thousands of immigrants and a new Israel. The fact that Britain was merely shouldering the unpopular mandate given her by the League of Nations or that later Britain had to do the dirty work of carrying out U.N.O.'s decisions made no difference to him.

He began to inoculate all who would listen to him with a good propaganda picture of typical Britons. They all, on the Hecht model, had popping eyes, were a cross between the late Sir Aubrey Smith and Lord Haw-Haw, and dodged in and out of turkish baths all day. They were "finished, without a cause and without an empire."

His Friends Had Votes

His friends in Israel were the terrorists. His friends in America were all who would swallow his story; and their voting power can be assessed from the fact that before the last elections they prevented either Truman or Dewey giving any real comfort to Britain in her hard task.

The money Hecht collected helped to send the cream-coloured explosive envelopes to British Cabinet Ministers. It helped to kill young Farran, an innocent man who opened a parcel intended for his brother. It helped to murder fifty-two British soldiers, to the disgust of decent Jews. And it helped to fan the flame of anti-Semitism in the one country whose record of treatment of the Jews has always been the cleanest—Britain.

But, though it brought him notoriety, it brought him no respect from the world at large, and no thanks from the true leaders of Israel itself. Said the Israeli representative to U.N.O.: "The Hecht group are not partners in Israel's destiny. Their august feet have not trodden the soil of Israel. They do not intend to leave the fleshpots behind them and become citizens of the new republic."

So there is little Ben—again the odd man out. Throwing somersaults in spangled tights, crying "Look at me!" while the sober world turns its back on him.

Rogues, he says himself in one of his books, are unusual creatures whose egos are greater than their minds. He may not mind, therefore, if I call him what he is: a rogue.

But he is still a dangerous rogue. If he persists in his irresponsible campaign throughout 1949 he can cause trouble in the world, trouble for Israel, for the Arab countries in the East, and for Britain and America who must bear the brunt of U.N.O. actions if U.N.O. is to be effective.

BABY'S FINE, BUT HE NEEDS A

by HARVEY GRAHAM, M.D.

The babies of today are healthier. The quality's there; Britain's problem is now combining quality with quantity, for the postwar boom in the birthrate seems to be over

A FEW WEEKS AGO the Registrar-General announced some of the vital statistics for 1948. There was the lowest death rate ever recorded. There were fewer stillbirths than in any previous year. The number of babies dying under the age of one year was the lowest ever.

These three new health records attracted a lot of attention. What attracted no attention at all was the fact that in 1948 in England and Wales there were 777,648 live babies born. This figure may be the first indication of the end of the postwar boom in babies.

Let us take a look at the past.

Victorian families had great quantities of babies and their Edwardian successors pursued the same lavish population policy. From 1891 to 1909 there were more than 900,000 babies born every year in England and Wales. The jackpot year was 1903 with a total of 948,000. There followed a fairly steady decline which was interrupted by the first postwar baby boom of this century.

In 1920 there was a new high record of 958,000 births—falling with a bump to 849,000 in 1921.

History may not repeat itself but it often follows familiar patterns. After a great war there is always a rise in the birthrate, as if Nature were trying to make up for the prodigal waste of lives engineered by man.

The war which has not yet faded from our memories ended in 1945 and again after two years there was a boom in babies.

In the years before 1939 there were about 600,000 babies every year. Then, in 1947 as in 1920, there was a record jump of 886,820 births. In 1948, as in 1921, there was a drop of over 100,000, a drop to 777,648.

It does seem the boom has ended. The decline in our birth rate has started again and the downward trend may well continue.

Experts Were Right

Some of the experts on population trends said that this would happen. The recent postwar boom lasted a little longer and went up a little higher than the experts thought likely. But the figure for 1948 babies goes far to vindicate their view that the recent trend was no more than a fleeting postwar interruption of the decline in our birth rate which began in 1903.

Since the experts seem to have been right about the immediate postwar period they may also be right about the next few years. The key experts are serving on the Royal Commission on Population which was set up by the Government in March, 1944.

The Commission may not issue its report for months or even years but here is the cautious forecast of one of its foremost population statisticians. He says that the 1948 figure of about 780,000 will drop to 730,000 by 1950 to 1952, and to 680,000 in the next two years.

Estimating the trend of the birth rate in future is difficult, but all the facts suggest that the rate will continue its decline from the top boom figure of 1947. There were very low birth rates in the 1930s, and baby girls born in 1930 are now of marriageable age. So for the next few years there will be fewer young married women because there were fewer girl babies twenty years ago.

And there will still be the same proportion of childless "surplus" women because in most years there are more girl babies than boys.

Less cautious prophets say that the decline which all the experts forecast will continue until our population will fall below thirty millions by the end of this century.

All over Western Europe and North America the birth rates are declining, apart from the postwar spurts which now seem to be ending. All over Russia, India, Africa and Asia birth rates are increasing.

If numbers mean power then the balance of power is moving east. The reason for this is obvious enough.

The development of a nation has three phases which merge into each other. First there is no control over birth or death. Population remains small and stationary. In the second phase improvements in hygiene, in sanitation, in feeding, and the application of medical science bring the death rate tumbling down but leave births uncontrolled. As a result there is a steady increase in the population.

This is the phase which Russia, India, China, South America and most of the non-white peoples are passing through.

Spacing Out the Family

The third phase is marked by the democratization of birth control. Widespread knowledge of contraception makes it possible to plan and space the births in the family.

Birth rates fall steadily and the population first of all becomes stationary and then declines.

The biggest single factor in the decline in the birth rate which began in this country in 1903 is the increasing knowledge of effective birth control. The spread of this knowledge is fundamentally good. There should be no unwanted children, and today there are more wanted children and fewer unwanted children than ever before.

Nothing but good for the mother and the whole family results from the deliberate spacing of births. Birth control is no longer a controversial question. Today criticism is directed not against the practice of contraception but against the fact that some local authorities lag behind others in making the necessary knowledge freely available to married women.

There can be no question of putting the clock back. If there is any change discernible in the next few years it will be in the wider extension of the practice of birth control and in the application of new and improved techniques.

Yet this may mean a population of thirty millions by the end of this century.

The year 2000 is not all that far away. Many of us will live till then and, atom-bombs permitting, most of our children should be flourishing mightily and complaining to their children that things are not what they were.

Suppose our population does dwindle in this way. How does this affect us

Here's the outlay on baby—if there's room for him in a shared home

BROTHER

now and is there anything to be done about it?

It affects now all sorts of plans that are being made for the future. It means that we shall have fewer children to provide for and more old people. Schools planned for building in the next few years are intended to last a lifetime. Towards the end of their period of usefulness they may be very empty—and our grandchildren may be wondering why on earth we built schools that size and left them to struggle with the problem of millions of old people.

A Nation of Veterans?

In 1901 every hundred workers in this country supported 58 dependants—7 old people and 51 children. By 1999 every 100 workers will still be supporting 58 people—41 old men and women and 17 children.

These are possibilities that should be borne in mind by every Government department. They affect all our long-term housing proposals and other domestic plans. They have a bearing on the future size of the Armed Forces, on foreign policy, and on our future status as a world Power.

Future policy must take account of this great social change. Where children are wanted, as they always will be, there will be children. But the proportion of unwanted children will continue to diminish—and it is good that this should be so.

If our population is to be maintained at anything like its present level, the problem to be solved is a difficult one. Young married couples who are content with one or two children must be persuaded to want two or three children.

No advertising campaign will bring this about. Exhorting people to have children is like selling refrigerators to Eskimos—a complete waste of time. Bribing people to have children is just as ineffective. Mussolini and Hitler tried this method.

Yet there is a tendency away from the one-child family of the 1930s. Families of two or three children are more fashionable than they were and this trend could be encouraged. There are still not enough three- and four-child families to halt the decline in our birth-rate, but there could be more of them, and more of them might halt it.

I believe there would be more such families if as a nation we tackled two big groups of problems. The first set of problems is familiar and is the concern of the politicians and economists.

One Seems Quite Enough!

The cost of rearing and educating a family is one deterrent. Housing difficulties have a lot to do with the deliberate childlessness of many young couples. The chronic lack of home helps and baby sitters is yet another potent argument brought forward by a couple who have had three dreadful years with one difficult child and say, "Never again."

The other group of problems concerns every married couple. There are thousands of young married women who want to have a baby and yet never achieve a successful pregnancy. There are thousands of women who have had one baby and who will not have another because they will not face again the terrifying pangs of a confinement in which they received no relief from the pains of childbirth.

Painless childbirth is possible in all except a few unusual cases, and every woman who is having a baby should be relieved by analgesia or anaesthesia—or by other methods—of all the worst pains of labour. Then there would be no more one-child families kept at that one-child level because of a first confinement which ought to have been made easy and was not.

Peter Thorneycroft, M.P., recently introduced into Parliament a Private Member's Bill providing for analgesia in childbirth, which means that no woman would be denied relief from the pains of labour unless she was medically unfit to receive any kind of analgesia.

If a Bill of this nature became law then one of the reasons for not having more children would no longer apply.

For the young women who want and never achieve babies there is more hope today than ever before. Most large hospitals now have fertility clinics, but there are still not enough of them and the work they do is not yet widely known. Even the simple principles on which their work is based are not generally understood.

From twenty to twenty-five is the right age to start a family. And I would advise any young couple to start the family first and sort out the housing and other problems later.

If after two years there are no signs of a pregnancy see your family doctor and let him, if need be, refer you to a special clinic.

All sorts of things affect fertility and many of the barriers to a successful pregnancy can easily be removed. A few injections of sex hormones are all that is needed in some cases. For many young women who are overweight, dieting alone will restore the impaired fertility to normal. In some other cases a simple five-minute internal operation has the desired effect.

Other cases require psychological rather than physical treatment. Typical of this group is one woman I know who, though wanting children, remained childless and unhappily married till the age of forty. Then her worthless husband was killed during the war. She married again, this time happily, and was pregnant within a few months.

The psychological barrier set up by her unhappiness and by her unconscious dislike of a child who might be like her first husband was responsible for an apparent sterility, which disappeared with her second marriage.

Treatment Usually Works

Psychological, dietetic and endocrine factors are all much better understood than they were, and there are only a few cases in which no improvement follows the modern scientific treatment of impaired fertility.

Wider knowledge of these fertility clinics would in itself improve the birth-rate and the prospects of a quiverful of happiness for many childless couples. Acceptance of a measure such as the Thorneycroft Bill would show that Parliament is alive to its responsibilities in connection with the better conduct of confinements.

Wider knowledge of the whole problem of our declining birthrate is a first prerequisite for effective action in dealing with that problem.

Even if the baby-boom of the postwar years seems to have ended, there need be no sharp decline in the birth rate if we only take the necessary short-term steps now as part of a long-term population policy.

Professor Henri Bonnet, who visited London as an official of the United Nations Child Welfare Fund, said recently:

"British babies are super-babies compared with the others. It means that Britain will, a few years hence, have the finest generation of young men and women, both mentally and physically, in Europe. . . . The reasons for this phenomenal baby health are very simple. In Britain you put first things first. You realized that there was not much food to go round, but you decided that the children must be looked after first."

That is true enough and it means that at the moment we have quality and quantity.

We can maintain the quality of our babies. If we really do put first things first we should also be able to maintain the quantity at the level that Britain will need if it is to continue as a first-class Power.

Clinics make a mother's lot easier. Yet many women stay one-baby mothers. Cost isn't the only reason

WILL THE GIPSIES EVER SETTLE

Thirty thousand gipsy families are still on the move most of the year—a problem for the town planners. Is there no settled place in postwar Britain for the wayward Romany?

by HARRY HOPKINS

TAKE A 298 TROLLEYBUS from Woolwich to Belvedere and the houses that line the left of the road mark the end of one world. Follow the cinder track that runs off behind them, over the railway line and across the marshes that run down to the Thames and you step into another.

You are among old-time caravans, carved and gaily painted. A chill wind sweeps down from the Estuary and whirls upwards the smoke from a hundred tin chimneys. A big brown horse ambles by, three dark-eyed children astride. A ring of men squat round a crackling fire. Raven-haired women lean out of caravans, their elbows along the half-doors.

You are in the great meeting place of England's gipsy clans, the Smiths and the Boswells, the Loveridges and the Williamses.

The first winter they unhitched their horses here and bought the bits of land for their caravans to stand on, this place was an orchard. Now it is a muddy wilderness under towering power pylons. But the fat black pots still simmer over gipsy fires. There is still the tang of wood-smoke in the air.

It is a century since George Borrow wrote that the Romanies were dying out, but tonight gipsy fires ring London.

Each year as the winter closes down the caravans come rolling in to Belvedere and Waltham Cross and Datchet and Colnbrook and St. Mary Cray. Thirty thousand Romany families still wander about Britain. Real families, too. Ten children are common, and there are three with twenty-four.

Off They Go Again

When April returns the horses go back into the shafts and the "travellers" are off again on their leisurely voyages of adventure through the fields and lanes of Bucks and Berks and Hants and Surrey. But it is in Kent, among the hopfields, and the orchards and the cosy villages that they find their true home. The Kent police understand them and are kind. Next door, in suburbanite Surrey, the caravans are a "nuisance," to be moved on the second each statutory forty-eight hours elapses.

And there are places where every man's hand is turned against them. Last autumn the citizens of Clavering (Essex) received an urgent summons to a special meeting. Its agenda—"To consider ways and means of stopping the gipsy invasion." "Among suggestions we shall discuss," announced an official, "is one that tradesmen and publicans should refuse to serve the gipsies."

When it comes to this sort of thing one Romany is match for any dozen *gorgios*. He falls back on the guile of his race, sharpened in the battle with Authority down the centuries. In Romany encampments names are still changed as easily as shirts.

And, illiterate as they generally are, the gipsies are excellent "hedge-lawyers," as the Clerk of one rural district council had occasion to discover. Resolving to take a firm line with his "gipsy problem," this rash official served summonses on scores of caravan-dwellers for failing to "abate their nuisances."

When the great day of reckoning came, not one case could be proceeded with. All the summonses were bad on account of wrong addresses. The gipsies had changed caravans.

Such tricks are merely self-protective. Those who know the gipsies best are keenest to refute blatant charges that they are a "bad lot." When Gloucestershire farmers and police chiefs met in an anti-gipsy conference, a Roman Catholic priest, Monsignor B. M. Williams sent a long letter in their defence. "Their sexual morality," he wrote, "is very much higher than ours and for that reason there will still be gipsies long after our race has become extinct."

"Of course they'll pinch and steal—but generally only what they can eat or put on their backs," a farmer told me. "They're not *real* thieves. I'd call them grown-up children. . . ."

Just what happens to grown-up children in this land of export targets and identity cards and direction of labour? I have found two answers to that—one very cheering, the other depressing.

Here and there, the old Romany—bold, shrewd, lively, happy in the knowledge of being one of the world's few free men—lives on. The spirit survives, for instance, in Mrs. Syd Smith, polishing up the brass rails and knobs in her caravan till they shine like fire, reflecting her frilly curtains and the painted crockery laid out upon her shelves. It lives on, too, in her husband, who built this handsome caravan in the manner of his fathers, carving it lovingly, painting it in many colours.

There's nothing but mud beyond the Smiths' caravan steps, yet they are as houseproud in their way as those other Smiths, of "The Elms" are in theirs.

But though at Belvedere there's only a three-minute walk and a railway line between them, their worlds are planets apart. The world of the caravans is a world without alarm clocks and newspapers and politics—these people never vote. Syd Smith and his lady and their eight children belong to the greater world under the sky and they belong to their own people. They live together and feel together and in a discontented world they are content.

Squalid Failures

That is one side of the medal. Unfortunately there is another. For, for every Romany who has risen above our jet-propelled "civilization" there are, I suspect, two who have gone under. These are the "mumpers," the half-castes whom the Romanies call *diddikais* and despise. They have sunk into indescribable squalor. In them the Romany curse has turned into a whine.

Industrialism presses hard upon the old Romany ways. Old Mr. Cooper has stopped building his old-style caravans at Belvedere and gone off to live in a hut. And some of the young men are making stream-lined trailers—with aluminium.

The Romany language is approaching the end of the journey that started nine hundred years ago in the plains of the Indus. It's a corrupt and fragmentary jargon now, though now and again some long-forgotten word rises to an old man's lips and some zealous pedant writes it down and sends it off post-haste to the Gipsy Lore Society which is today more gipsy than the gipsies.

And it is only at weddings, when the Registry Office has done its bit and the ancient ritual gets its turn that the colourful satins and silks of the story-book gipsies come out of the few caravans where they're still stored away.

Cross Your Palm, Sir

One characteristic which, in self-preservation perhaps, all gipsies have kept is their unique faculty for conjuring a living out of thin air. Shortages and licensing have hit some of the old crafts like basket-making, but if horse trading's out now, there's old lorry dealing; there's the holly and greenery at Christmas and there's "flowers" all the year round, deftly made from wood shavings, dye and a few crab apples.

There are still Smiths who are tinkers and Boswells who get palms crossed with silver, and the two old Romany favourites, clothes-pegs and firewood selling, still serve their turn.

Piled high with bundles of fresh-cut ash and hazel sticks, a Romany horse and wagon rattles across the Belvedere marshes. In a circle of white wood shavings the Shepherd family are giving a display a time-and-motion study man might envy. One man lops the sticks into lengths; another splits them precisely with a flick of the knife; a girl twists the bit of tin round the ends with one switch of the wrist. One man can turn out four dozen "tograns" an hour.

Every gipsy will tell you that their pegs, made just as they have made them for centuries, are stronger and cheaper than machine-made pegs.

These are their winter trades. As spring comes the caravans move off on the trail of the harvests. The "travellers'" families scatter through the fields of England, gathering in the strawberries and the sugar beet and the plums, peas in Lincolnshire and apples in Worcestershire and cherries and hops in Kent. They are the heaven-sent answer to the farmers' seasonal labour problem.

Many of them did well in the war, too. Nathan Smith was a tinker in 1939. Perhaps he came to your door with his knife-grinding wheel. "All Kinds of Cutlery Ground and Set. Chairs Reseated—Rush or Cane. Soldering Done."

Called up, he found the ideal outlet for his Romany talent in the unorthodox force of Lieut.-Colonel Peniakoff—the celebrated "Popski's Private Army." He parachuted into Holland, worked disguised as a German officer, was decorated for valour. When Popski lost an arm, Nathan Smith, the tinker, made him a hook.

Today Nathan Smith, the scourge of the Germans, is back on the Belvedere marshes. With his wife and five children he lives in a green tent, three yards square. And in his pocket he carries the letters from his friend, "Colonel Popski."

By a stroke of inspiration, Bevin set a gipsy to recruit the gipsies. For three years Ernest Williams travelled England, visiting his people, fitting them into the war effort. Gipsy girls, whose supple fingers had once woven intricate baskets, quickly mastered complicated electrical wiring. The Lovells, a family of fishnet makers, parked their caravan in a seaport yard and turned out landing nets for the Navy.

"Give a gipsy somewhere to put his horse and van and he's happy," says Williams. "Once he's settled in a job he'll do it well. He doesn't care about hours, and if the boss understands his needs, he's even willing to work for nothing sometimes. . . ."

Three years after the war gipsies are still making their way to Williams's caravan at Marden in Kent to ask him to find them jobs again. "There're hundreds willing to serve the country," he says, "if only the country would let them."

Can postwar Britain find no place for the talents of this strange wayward race? Could the wanderers ever settle to a steady life, a fixed horizon?

Twenty years ago the gipsies in Ernest Williams's camp near Woking received an ultimatum from the council: "Go into houses—or get out." Out of forty caravans resting there—thirty-seven rolled on, the Williams among them.

Yet for thirteen years now Williams's own parents have been living happily in a bungalow at Woking where his father tends the council's lawns and hedges. And down on Belvedere Marsh they say that ninety per cent of the caravan dwellers would like houses.

Roll on or Stay Put?

Everywhere I went among the caravans I found this conflict—of the old and the new, the Romany wanderlust and *gorgio* "civilization."

Said Mrs. Syd Smith, hanging an enormous line of washing outside her caravan: "This is our life. I wouldn't change it." Across the way a woman wanted to sell me her caravan. She was "going *gorgio*"—moving into a house.

Many minds are made up by the claims of the children, learning to read and write, opening the doors to the house-dweller's world. Here and there are teachers who take an understanding interest in their gipsy pupils. To many more they are just a nuisance, to be segregated in "backward" classes. "A waste of time," one Romany mother overheard a teacher say. "They just can't take it in. . . ."

For if civilization poses a problem to the gipsies, the gipsies equally are a problem to civilization—and the *gorgios* are as divided as the Romanies on the answer. Hitler revived an old one in

DOWN?

barbed wire and machine guns. Hungary tattooed the gipsies' identifications upon their skin.

But there are others who have detected in the Romany character something fine and worth preserving. At Uzhorod in Slovakia there is a famous gipsy school where in open grounds among trees Romany children learn not only the three Rs, but also drawing, the violin and their own traditional handicrafts. Russia has a gipsy theatre and forty gipsy collective farms in the Volga Basin.

It is three centuries since at the Suffolk Assizes we hanged our last gipsies for the crime of being gipsies. But in the eyes of Authority they are still—in the words of a Henry VIII statute—"the outlandish people calling themselves Egyptians," a sanitary inspector's nightmare, a thorn in the side of town planners.

When, recently, Ruislip Urban District Council served a notice of expulsion on its gipsies, their caravans were halted by a watchful Eton police sergeant waiting on his frontier. The councils referred the impasse to the Ministry of Health.

They Hate Fences

Now at last one authority is breaking away from this ancient bureaucratic sport of "pass-the-gipsy." Before the war the Guildford Rural District Council's attempts to deal with its caravan colonies pitched on undrained, low-lying ground were no more successful than most. When it put the gipsies into houses they backed their wagons through the fences, filled the front gardens with junk. Only one-fifth of the caravan-dwellers survived the rigours of Suburbia.

So now the Guildford planners are embarking upon an imaginative experiment which meets the gipsies half way. They have designed a gipsy village—twenty-seven simple bungalows, each in plenty of ground, *with no fences.* In each place there'll be a concrete bed for a caravan to stand on and a lean-to where it can lie up in winter. Then, when spring comes, the house-dwellers can roll off, "travellers" again.

One problem remains. How to get the gipsies into their "model" village?

Granny Ayres turns her weather-wrinkled face towards the bulldozers snorting over the new roads and drains. "Houses!" she exclaims. "I wouldn't live in one of them places. See here, sir. You wouldn't like to live the way we do, would you. No, and we don't want to live the way you live neither. . . ."

But a little farther along, standing over the embers of a fire, a young Marshall says: "Seven years in the Forces—and then back to this. About time the council did something."

Even the Guildford planners, it seems, cannot resolve the conflict in the soul of modern gipsydom.

Ernest Williams tells how he once took a gipsy mother of sixteen children to a food office to arrange for ration books. She took one wondering look at the piles of forms, eyed the busy clerks behind the counters. "All this fiddling!" she muttered—and rushed out still without her sixteen ration books.

Was her Romany instinct right? Is there any other answer for these people? Is compromise—death to all true gipsydom—the ultimate freedom? Or is it possible to accept material comfort without being enslaved?

To that question every man—and every gipsy—must make his own answer.

The Syd Smiths (eight children in family) cling to four-wheeler life. Other gipsies hanker for four walls

THE HAUNTED MEADOW

Continued from page 12

of the scene and the shock of hearing the familiar voices again left Mr. Packard without power to reply. It was all too far beyond anything that had ever happened to him, too much against all he had ever believed.

Instead of answering their questions, or asking any of his own, he could only stand and gape at them in silence. In the moonlight he could make out every detail of their uniforms and their facial expressions. They looked in every way just as they had the dozens of times he had seen them before.

"I guess you're wondering what the hell we're doing here," said Pete.

"That's putting it mild," added Tex. "Poor Packy probably thinks he's gone completely nuts."

"What it is," explained Pete, "is that Hallow-e'en is a special sort of day up where we've been. They call it All Saints' Eve, and anyone who wants one can get a pass to midnight to come back to the last place they were on earth."

"The only catch to it," said Hank, "is that you can't move from that place unless someone sees you. This is the fifth year now that we've come down and sat twiddling our thumbs on this bank."

"Yeah," said Moe. "They've as many rules and regulations and as much brass up there as we had in Squadron 217, and everything's just as fouled up. Me—I always land in the wrong outfit!"

"Hey, Packy!" asked Tex suddenly. "How about giving us a beer? They'd have a pretty tough job pinching you for serving us after hours."

"That's an idea," said Hank. "Even that warm English beer of yours would taste good right now. How about it, Sarge?"

"It's O.K. with me," answered Pete, "but we better get started. We haven't much time."

The next thing Mr. Packard realized, he was heading back across Four Acre Meadow, arm in arm with Hank and Moe, and the others were following behind. Hundreds of questions and protests rushed to his mind, but there wasn't one he could manage to put into words.

Later he could only remember the walk back to the village as something that had happened in a dream, the details being dimmed by the haze of unreality. He knew that the boys had bombarded him with questions of their own about the village, the airfield and various people they knew, but what he said to them in reply, or whether he replied at all, he couldn't for the life of him recall.

When they arrived at the "Running Pheasant," he threw open the door, turned on the lights, and led the boys into the small private parlour.

Almost automatically he put another lump of coal on the fire and went behind the bar to draw five pints of mild and bitter. Then he poured a whisky for himself.

"Still the same old joint," said Moe, when they were seated. "And still no juke box!"

"I like things to stay the same," said Lanny. "You go back to the States after five years and everything has been torn down or changed into something different. This makes you feel at home, no matter how long you have been away."

"I bet," added Hank, "we could come back here a hundred years from now and still find it just the same."

"By then," said Moe, "it would probably be the only bar in the whole world that didn't have a juke box."

"Tell us about the party, Packy," asked Pete, after the beers had been set on the table. "Did it all go off O.K.?"

"Yes, the party went fine," said Mr. Packard. "Mr. Halloran took charge of everything, and almost all the children in the village came. The back storeroom was all done in cornstalks and pumpkins, we had two big tubs for apple ducking, and in front of the fire we had Doctor Dalrymple's skeleton."

"What about the ghost?" asked Lanny. "That was going to be me."

"Doctor Dalrymple played the ghost," answered Mr. Packard. "We had all the lights go out and he came in through the side window. A lot of the children were frightened, but they loved it all the same. Then he told them stories and ended up by doing a dance with the skeleton in his arms. I think they liked that best of all."

"We didn't spoil things," asked Pete, "by—well, by not turning up?"

"They all missed you," said Mr. Packard, "but we told them you were kept at the field and couldn't get leave. It wasn't until the next day that they found out it was your plane that crashed in the woods."

Hearing his own voice and summoning up the details of the party five years before made Mr. Packard feel more confident and gave the only reality there was to what was taking place. His whirling mind needed something solid to rest on, and this supplied it.

All the while he talked, they listened attentively, smiling and nodding their heads in approval. It was almost as though they had worried all this time that their crashing and failing to show up had spoiled the party for the children.

As Mr. Packard finished describing the night of the party, Pete stood up and said: "Well, Packy, I'm afraid we've got to be going. It's almost twelve."

"Things are tough up there," added Moe. "They picked up a lot of M.P.s at Normandy and now the whole place is lousy with them."

As they rose from their chairs and started for the door, Mr. Packard walked along with them, just as he had done all the nights they had come before. After opening the front door for them, he stood and watched them put on their caps and button up the collars of their leather flying jackets.

"It's been great fun seeing you, Packy," said Pete. "Wish we could do it more often."

With the first booming stroke of twelve from the clock in the village square they all shook hands with him and went out into the street.

He was still standing in the doorway when they turned and waved to him from the crossroad that led out to Four Acre Meadow.

Their parting voices blew back, as though through the years. "So long, Packy! Thanks for the beer." . . . "Don't forget that juke box!" . . . "For a Limey, you're an O.K. guy!" . . . "Don't take any wooden nickels!" . . . "We'll be seeing you, Packy!"

Mr. Packard watched their retreating figures blend and become enveloped in the ground mist that rolled in from the meadow. Even after they were lost from sight, he stood motionless in the open doorway, trying to piece together all that had happened since he started on his walk less than two hours ago. To none of it could he find any sense or explanation.

All he could think was that the whole thing was some sort of hallucination, possibly brought on by the doctor's tales earlier in the evening and aided by the few extra whiskies. It might even be, he told himself, that he had fallen asleep by the fire and only dreamed that he had been out for a walk to Four Acre

As for the fact that he, Horatio Packard, had actually seen and talked to a ghost—five of them, no less—he would have none of it. The proof, he suddenly saw, was simple.

All that was necessary was for him to go back into the small private bar and see that it was the same as he had left it at closing time, with all the tables cleared and the glasses polished in line at one end of the bar.

That it would be that way, with no traces of any visitors, human or supernatural, he was prepared to stake his entire Admiralty pension.

This thought strengthened his confidence more than anything that had happened since the queer business began—or he imagined it began—at Four Acre Meadow.

Moving with a sudden deliberation, Mr. Packard closed the front door of the "Running Pheasant" and bolted it securely.

The warmth of the room felt good after the cold of the night, and he was cheered by its brightness. As he put out the light in the hall, he laughed, thinking of the tricks a man's mind could play on him. Had the same series of hallucinations happened to any of the farmers of the district, he imagined how hesitant they would have been to face the proof that was sure to be in the next room.

"The only way to beat superstition," he told himself, "is to follow the facts to the end."

He even had a mind to telephone Doctor Dalrymple and cite the case in full to him as evidence of how superstitions start.

Then he opened the door to the private bar and saw that the table in front of the fire was bare and clean. There was only one chair that was pushed out of place—the one he himself had been sitting in, and no doubt sleeping in, too. Yes, he would call the doctor, despite the hour!

The telephone was in the front hallway, and before going to it he decided to put out the lights in the private parlour. The switch was beside the bar itself and, as he went towards it, his eyes looked up at his row of ship models along the top shelf.

There, propped against the hull of the *Victory*, was a toy lamb, scarcely bigger than a man's outspanned hand, which he remembered well, even though he hadn't seen or thought of it in years. It stood there with its woolly legs apart and its head cocked to one side.

It was the mascot which the boys had always carried in the plane with them and sometimes brought to the pub. They had bought it at the toy shop in the village just before their first bombing mission and had promised to give it to the "Running Pheasant" when their tour of operations was over.

With difficulty Mr. Packard made his way to the telephone in the hall, and his voice, when he gave the doctor's number to the operator, was uncertain and barely audible. The lamb, he knew from talking with others at the field, had gone with the boys on the day of their fatal flight to Bremerhaven.

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Self-Reform

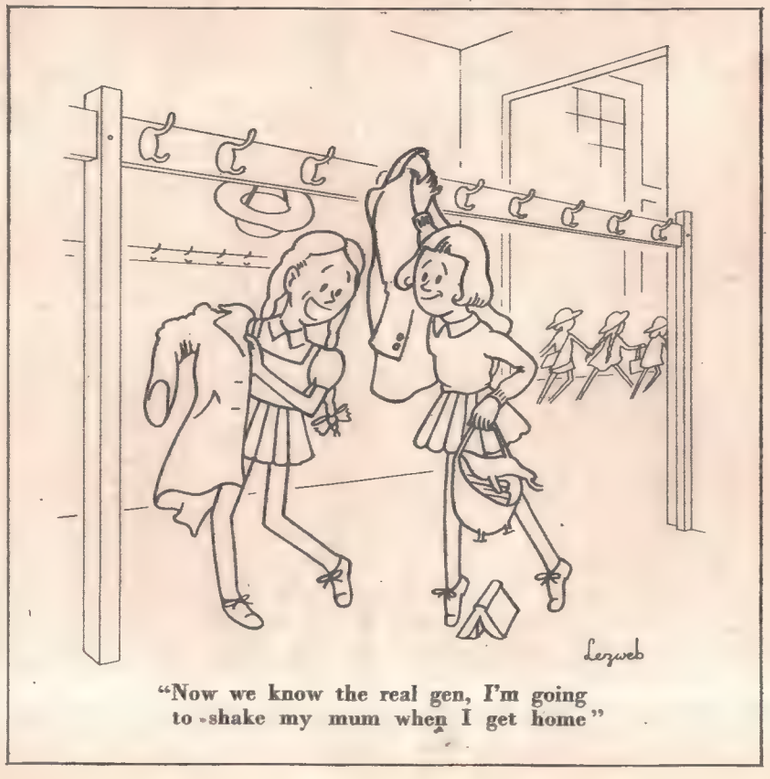
SOMEONE has just remarked to me: "You surely can't expect a person to change his character!"

But why not? A person's "character" is the way he thinks, and consequently the way he behaves. It is his moral fibre—or the lack of it. It is the result of ruling his impulses—or being ruled by them.

Of course, a person can change his character! He may need help or he may summon up enough willpower to do it alone. But the history of social reform is one long proof that it can be done.

The longer I live the more convinced I am that selfishness is the world's most deadly sin. And don't tell me that a person can't change that!

by ***ROFFE THOMPSON***



"Now we know the real gen, I'm going to shake my mum when I get home"

THE THINGS PEOPLE STORE AWAY!

by LAURENCE EARL

Horse carriages, Victorian knick-knacks. . . . The housing shortage is one reason; and sentimentality is another

John Bull photograph by William Kemp

Still in storage after thirty years, an ancient Panhard-Levasseur

NOT LONG AGO a couple, whose nine years of married life had been strained by too much squabbling, became involved in an argument that ended in a brawl. They decided to part and arranged for their furniture to be stored.

Early next day the packers went to work, but the house was a large one and at quitting time the removal preparations were still under way. By eleven the following morning the entrance hall was piled high with rolled rugs, crated china and stacked furniture. The rooms were empty.

At eleven o'clock, also, the master of the house tapped the foreman of the removal experts on the shoulder. His wife was clinging to his arm.

"There's been a sudden change of plans," he told the foreman happily. "Now, if you don't mind, put everything back again. . . ."

The foreman took the announcement calmly. In the storage business most things can happen.

Take, for example, the case of the four ancient broughams. These horse-drawn carriages, the property of a millionaire, were covered with canvas and stored in a large London depository when their owner sailed on a world cruise. This was in 1900. The millionaire died *en route*; but his relatives, who live in distant South America, have for half a century continued to pay storage fees which amount to far more than the value of the now useless broughams.

Thousands of Britons every year follow this example. What they have they hold—no matter what it costs.

"The storage trade lives on sentimental attachment to property," says J. O. Gerson, managing director of one of England's busiest depositories. "Women particularly never dispose of anything if it is possible to keep it."

Unending Variety

Strolling through the crammed honeycomb of a furniture depository, you see huge Victorian wardrobes, period chairs, plain pine kitchen tables, beds, stoves, statues and an unending variety of odds and ends that have been put into storage by folks who haven't a home of their own but are eagerly awaiting the happy day.

The average lot of furniture stored now is less than one fourth of what it was three decades ago. Then the contents of a twenty-five roomed house was considered a normal job. Fortunately for those in the business, the increase in the number of transactions more than compensates for the smaller households.

It has been estimated that Britain's bulging warehouses could today furnish from scratch every home in Southampton, Leicester and Dundee—and have plenty left over.

One warehouseman told me that while about fifty-five per cent occupancy of his depository space was considered normal and satisfactory, it was currently about ninety per cent full.

The recent movement of emigrants to Australia, Canada and elsewhere in the Commonwealth has accounted for much of the present-day boom. This is supplemented by constant replacements of diplomatic staffs, by the housing shortage everywhere, by business transfers and by political refugees. In one way or another, the world does come to the furniture warehouseman's door.

This is all right with him—but it brings headaches along with the joys. There was, for instance, the man who bought what he thought was one of the most valuable paintings on earth. He was certain it was a Titian. Moreover he had obtained it at an out-of-the-way second-hand shop for only a few pounds.

Wouldn't Take £500

Happily he rushed it to a depository and, after confiding to the manager its true worth—which he estimated to be at least £15,000—he had it reverently packed and put into safe keeping.

One day he brought a prospect—an American tourist—around to examine his prize. The American pursed his lips, nodded and said, "I'll give you five hundred pounds for it."

"Five hundred? *Five hundred?* Do I look a fool?" He refused to sell.

Some time later he died, leaving the storage rental for several years unpaid. He left no money and no relatives to make good his debt. After a while, the depository took the painting out of its wraps and sent for an appraiser.

"A very bad copy," came the unhesitating verdict. "Not worth five shillings." And that was that.

This, too, is a common experience in the work of a warehouseman. "The fact is," Gerson says plaintively, "we get awfully sceptical of values given to us."

Furniture warehousing is no haphazard business. Everything is ticked and taped. Many depositories keep separate rooms for pianos which are maintained at an even year-around temperature; safety deposit vaults for valuables; a room for office records, especially useful nowadays with office space at a premium; rooms where trunks and small baggage are so placed that easy access may be had to each piece; and even large cellars specially prepared for the storage of wine.

Small, fragile treasures are packed in the home, and many people think they could do the job themselves; but a warehouseman guarantees against breakage only if *he* does the packaging.

Case of the Chandelier

One man who owned a chandelier made of 2,400 pieces of drop crystal wanted to ship it to his new home several hundred miles away. He gave the job to his warehouseman, who dismantled it and packed it piece by piece. So complicated was the assignment that the man who took it apart had to accompany the fixture to the new home to assemble it again. No one else cared to finish so delicate a job he had not begun.

As your goods arrive at the warehouse a reception committee tags, numbers and lists each item. Your piano goes to the piano room. Your rugs and upholstered pieces are demothed and sewn into canvas and then stowed away. Curtains and cushions get the same treatment but are packed into cases. Furniture is padded and papered and packed. You can put your goods in a private room or into open storage, as you choose.

Trunkful of Memories

Breakages are comparatively rare, but accidents do happen. A classic example is that of the Liverpudlian who recently moved to Canada. Before leaving Britain he had sold his belongings except for two trunkfuls of odd bits of china, souvenirs and family heirlooms—all fragile, all cherished for associations rather than value. The trunks held his dearest memories of England, family and friends.

He watched them as they were loaded aboard ship at Liverpool, cautioning the dock workers to take care. He was on hand when they were hoisted from the hold in St. John, New Brunswick. He followed them to the warehouse in Toronto, which was his ultimate destination. He saw them safely placed on the warehouse lift.

Then he sighed with relief—at which instant, from the bowels of the depository, there came a tremendous crash. The lift had fallen five floors to the basement.

For a full minute the Liverpudlian stood there, face twisted in torture. He examined the crushed trunks. Finally he raised his head and said, "Well, boys, that's that!" He walked out.

The Canadian warehouseman, R. M. Hill, in telling of this minor tragedy, adds: "I've never seen the man since. He *could* have held us responsible, you know—but what was the use? The broken bits in the trunks were broken bits of sentiment. You can't pay off in that kind of currency."

Depositories have stored everything from mousetraps to human heads. The latter were brought into a London warehouse by an expert on the South Seas. He had spent years in research, had written scholarly books on native practices and, through the decades, collected anything and everything relating to the subject.

This included the heads—those of dark-skinned chieftains superbly preserved down to the last white tooth. Not long ago the New Zealand Government bought the collection.

Fur Coats Came in Handy

Away back in 1915 an American woman who had lived in London returned to New York. She left two fur coats behind in storage but never returned to claim them. During the hard winter of 1947, when the news of Britain's fuel shortage was headlined all over the earth, she suddenly remembered them. In a letter to an English friend she said, "Pay the rent due on them and the coats are yours."

The friend did. She found the garments somewhat stiff with the years but quite usable and very warm.

And, last year, when the railways were nationalised, an old gentleman with firm Tory leanings who had presented a model train to the Great Western Railway huffily demanded it back.

"I'm not going to have *my* train nationalised," he declared.

He put it into storage.

Purnley had been warned about old Harry—a bit touched he was, needed humouring. Smugly, Purnley did his best to please

SHEPHERD'S WARNING

by **DUDLEY HOYS**

ILLUSTRATED BY TONY WEARE

"See! Only a ewe and her lamb," said Purnley, shaking. Then, something else appeared—a hand!

PURNLEY WAS enjoying himself. The last time he had come up this dale road between the frowning fells he had been wearing greasy old clothes and shepherding a bunch of Bayne's Herdwicks. Now he was driving his own pale blue car, and wearing a bright ginger sports jacket and a pink tie. What was more, as a War Agricultural Committee official, he could talk to his ex-employer with a touch of condescension.

A hundred yards short of the farm, Purnley happened to glance to the right and saw Bayne himself. He was about four hundred feet up the fellside, repairing a wall gap. Purnley stopped the car, and with a hint of smugness in his smile, began to walk up the stony track.

It was a very still morning, the sky a queer blend of grey and sulphur. The great slopes had an effect of brooding. Against the outcrops of swart granite the brackens were startling in their greenery. Around the high ridge of distant Scafell a cloud lay draped like a sinister scarf.

Purnley grimaced at the scene, and compared it with the delights of the town, the cinemas and the pubs, and the dance hall where he often took a nice bit of stuff. Yes, Lingdale was an awful hole, and he had done himself a good turn when he got out of it.

He passed a patch of yellow-emerald bilberries. A recently clipped ewe was grazing there, the flock-mark of a stripe of red smit fresh on her back. Purnley grimaced again, disdainfully, comparing the days when he had laboured and sweated at clipping with his present elegant white-collar job.

The man by the wall, middle aged and lean, with ice-blue eyes that betrayed little of his thoughts, was placing a "through" in position, a slab of stone extending from side to side that helped to bind the others.

"Good morning, Mr. Bayne," said Purnley, scarcely a trace of Cumbrian in his accent.

Bayne turned. There were several seconds of silence.

"Ah hardly knaad tha," he said at last.

"Five years, you know." Purnley twiddled with his fluffy fair moustache. "It's a long time."

"Ay."

"I had to run up to this part of the world. Checking up on claims in connection with the Hill Farming Improvements Act." His voice sounded almost lordly. "Thought I'd look you up. Things round here seem much as usual."

"Ay."

"Old Harry still with you?"

"Ay."

"Is he really? He must be getting beyond it. And how's that son of his?"

There was another silence. Bayne glanced higher up the fellside. He said slowly:

"Last back end Tom was gatherin' on Mart Crag. He slipped."

"Good God! Was he——?"

"Tha knaas Mart Crag."

Purnley nodded, and shuddered. He never had cared for the heights. They got on his nerves.

"Pretty awful," he said. "Must have been a shock to old Harry."

"Harry's on top o' Mart Crag now, gatherin' last uns for clippin'. Gaa oop and hev a word wi' him."

"I certainly will."

Bayne stared at him steadily and thoughtfully, and laid a hand on his shoulder. "Don't tha say owt o' Tom."

"I quite understand."

"Nay, tha don't. Listen. Mebbe Harry will speak as if Tom's still aboot. Laikely he'll tell tha Tom's below, gatherin' a crag-fast ewe. Tha maun tek no notice."

Purnley's eyes widened, and he gave an expressive whistle. "Oh, I see. It's like that, is it? Poor old chap. O.K. I'll humour him. Don't you worry."

He continued up the track another three hundred feet, skirted a squelching patch marked by the white gossamer of cotton-grass and stiff sprigs of bog-myrtle, scrambled up some loose scree, and came to the brow of Mart Crag. It was a wide brow, fairly level, and grown with bent grass. Here and there sprawled massive boulders. Beyond, the crags pitched sharply downwards.

On one of the boulders, and wearing his usual nameless clothes, sat old Harry, who had been shepherding since he was thirteen. Nearby browsed about three dozen shaggy Herdwick ewes and their lambs, watched by a couple of alert dogs. Keeping well away from the edge, Purnley walked towards the old man.

"Hallo, Harry!"

Harry raised eyes the colour of dying bluebells. He put down his crook and held out a seamed hand.

"How's fettle?" he said.

"I'm O.K. I'm with the War Ag., you know. And how are you keeping? All right?"

"Ay."

Purnley perched himself on the other end of the boulder. The fells seemed unusually silent. From somewhere there came the hiss and mutter of a beck, and the sound stressed the silence in an unpleasant way. There was a dark and solemn mistiness hanging over the upthrust ridges beyond Mart Crag. Purnley felt that the whole place was full of sombre unease.

HARRY said: "Tha must meet Tom." He pointed towards the edge. "He's doon yonder."

A coldness prickled at Purnley. It would have been bad enough if the old man had spoken in a wild and wandering fashion. But his voice had been quiet and natural.

"Ay, doon yonder," Harry repeated.

"I don't think I shall have time to wait," said Purnley, and tried to turn the subject by discussing the browsing ewes. The fleeces were good, running to about three and a half pounds, eh? They'd injected all the lambs for pulpy kidney, of course? Been a fine, open lambing season, hadn't it?

To all the questions Harry gave his economical "Ay." He sat leaning forward a little, as if listening for some sound from below. His eyes kept watching the edge. His whole attitude proclaimed that he was waiting for somebody. To Purnley, it was quite horrible.

"A ewe an' her lamb crag-fast doon there. Tom's gaan tae fetch 'em oop. Fairly smart is Tom at that game."

Purnley moistened his lips, and said: "Looks as if there's going to be a storm." He pretended to laugh. "Really can't afford to get soaked. I've a lot of work to do. I must get along."

"Storm?" said Harry. "Nay. 'Twill pass ower."

Purnley fidgeted. The air was heavy and felt stuffy and cold at the same time. He had always feared the fells on sunless days. They could be so austere and aloof. Today the whole mighty mass seemed to be waiting for something.

Harry leaned forward suddenly. "Did tha hear?"

Quite distinctly, from below, came the blaring of a sheep.

Purnley wanted to burst out: "Don't be a fool! It's only some ewe down there. Daresay it'll find its way to safety." But somehow the look in the old man's eyes stopped him.

No, it wouldn't do to try to reason with the old chap. It wouldn't do at all. Better humour him. Better still to get away from here and down to the

ILLUSTRATED [illegible] WILLIAM LITTLE

Traitor's Island

by MARTHA ALBRAND

Again there were hints that Julie had been concerned in the betrayal. Fantastic, thought Webb. And yet, with so many rumours, could he afford to ignore them entirely?

RETURNING TO THE Italian village of San Ricci, Webb Carr is conscious that he cannot escape memories of the past. When he was there before, it was as a special agent during the war, sent in to contact local partisans.

Then, the only person still living in the De Cresti Palace was Julie, young widow of a murdered partisan. Julie shielded him until they were betrayed to the Germans.

Since that night, he has not seen Julie again until now. As London chief of an American legal firm, he is back at San Ricci to trace the authenticity of a priceless Titian painting, the property of the De Cresti family, which has been offered for sale in New York.

Carlo, Julie's cousin, only surviving male member of the family and a rising young politician, tells Webb that the painting must have been stolen, and that no De Cresti would ever sell a family heirloom. But, in fact, he has himself sold the painting, without his grandmother Francesca's consent.

Nervous about Webb's persistent investigations, Carlo tries to fob him off, and also to put an end to the friendship between the Englishman and Julie, for whom he has contracted a marriage with a wealthy young nobleman: such a match would help his political career.

In the village, Webb hears that Augusto, one of his wartime helpers, has been accused and killed for the betrayal to the Germans. But, as Luigi, an old waiter, points out, Augusto may have been merely a scapegoat. The real traitor might still be at large.

Unable to rest with this on his mind, Webb goes to see Serafina, the dead man's widow, who has been ostracized by the rest of the village. He is attacked by her dog.

PART IV

Serafina's Story

FOR the instant following the dog's attack, Webb became electrically alive, humming with that almost-forgotten feeling of tension and fear he had known in his wartime activities. He had rammed his fist deep between the dog's jaws, so that the vicious fangs were unable to bite. But the brute was powerful.

Behind the dog, watching complacently, was Serafina.

"Call off your dog," he told her.

The woman watched him, unmoving.

"Get his muzzle," he said.

He had to repeat it before she came

The dog reared savagely from the kick. Webb flexed his elbow. Behind them, Serafina watched complacently

slowly closer. There was no sign of recognition in her large eyes, set deep in their sockets and shaded with enormous purplish circles.

"I do not own a muzzle," she said, her voice deep with challenge.

He stood bracing himself, grinding his heels into the soft, dark soil, pulled by the dog struggling for breath and freedom.

"Tie him up then, or take a stone and knock him unconscious."

Serafina smiled. "You look very strong," she said, "but not strong enough to hold him for long."

He saw her then, not as she was now standing in front of him, but as she had been once, bending over him in the vineyards, loosening the ropes of his parachute. "You're hurt. You struck a pole." The kind, motherly face, the deep warm voice, her eagerness to help. He shook the image away.

He would not be able to hold the dog much longer. It was snarling, slavering over his fist, grinding the knuckles as it tried to free its fangs. Webb brought his right fist round in a sharp blow to the dog's ear, knocking it sideways.

The dog came up and at him again. He kicked it under the snout. But now the beast was out for blood. It leaped savagely up at him. Webb had just time to flex himself, and, as it came at his throat, caught its hot snout with his forearm.

"I do not want to kill your dog," he said, "but if you will not help me, I'll have to smash him against——" and he nodded towards the pole next to him. "Do what I tell you, Serafina. Take the rope and make him fast."

Julie would have known the voice he used, very calm, but unyielding in its calmness. It forced obedience.

The dog's teeth had torn the skin below his elbow, and a small trickle of blood began to drip down his arm.

"So he hurt you, after all."

Webb kept staring at Serafina, a woman he had known as kind and motherly, and whom he knew no longer, because humiliation had forced her into a defensive attitude that made her untouchable.

"A little," he said. "Show me where I can wash."

A few yards farther up, between house and stable, was a pump. The water ran thinly from the spout. Serafina stood watching him, resentment in her eyes.

"Don't you know who I am?"

"No," she answered. "If all the world is your enemy what does it matter what one of them looks like and what he calls himself?"

"Remember the Englishmen you sheltered one night four years ago?"

"Yes," she said. "I remember. They seemed like angels descending from the sky. We prayed all evening long for their safe arrival, but they turned out to be devils come from hell, for they brought unhappiness and killed Augusto, my husband, and drove my children away. They used to brag, to promise us peace and happiness, and they gave me nothing but misery."

"But one of them came back, Serafina, because he couldn't believe that your husband betrayed them."

Slowly, her hands stretched protectively in front of her, Serafina fell back from him, step by step, until the wall of her house stopped her retreat. She wasn't afraid of humans, but a ghost could frighten her into complete numbness.

Webb continued to speak gently, as if talking to a child. After a while Serafina separated herself from the stone, but she made no gesture of welcome.

"I was right then," she said, "to stay here—to stay in spite of everything. If I had moved away, if I had let myself be driven away, you would never have found me."

Presently he followed her into the house and sat in the kitchen as he had four years ago. Serafina, moving slowly and heavily, brought wine and glasses, small green olives and a buttery yellow slab of home-made cheese.

"In spite of them," she said—"in spite of them I live well. I have everything I want. Food and wood and cloth, and even money, should I want to buy myself more. Only I would rather starve than have Apollo——" Webb followed her glance towards the mantel of the crude fireplace, where a picture stood gaudily framed in chromium.

"They stoned him," said Serafina. "I made him go back to school and he came home bleeding. Still I made him go back, and told him to hold his head high and hit anybody who dared say his father was a traitor. But he has not inherited the proud heart of Augusto. One day I waited in vain. I went down the hill and stood there all night long, afraid he was dead, that they had killed him, but he had only run away."

She poured the wine, lifted it to the light and set it down in front of him.

"He couldn't endure it. For months I had no word. Then one day he came back. I recognized his whistle. He wore an elegant suit and carried more money than I'd ever seen in one lump, in a red leather wallet."

Webb looked again at the photograph of the boy.

"My daughter broke, too," she said. "She couldn't stand the hatred, the threats; she was afraid. I had to put her in an asylum and she doesn't know me any longer."

In the kitchen it was cool and dim; only the flies buzzed, blue and big.

"How did it ever happen that Augusto was suspected?"

"First of all," said Serafina, "someone saw him come out of Reinoldi's house."

"Reinoldi?"

"The Mayor of Novara . . . the Fascist."

"When did Augusto ever see Reinoldi?"

"The day the *palazzo* was raided."

"But why?"

Serafina looked at him. "Because of the *contessina*. She wanted a letter delivered personally, urgently. She came rowing across that morning and ran up the hill. Out of breath she was, and very pale, and she said there was nobody but Augusto to go."

A fly settled on the rim of Webb's glass and he caught it with the palm of his hand. The wine inside the glass jumped and a few drops spilled. Serafina lifted the hem of her skirt to wipe it away and kept wiping at it long after the spot was gone.

"It was I who advised Giulia de Cresti to see the people she would ordinarily have seen, even while we were hiding on the island."

"That's what Augusto thought. But he couldn't convince the others. 'What was in the letter?' they yelled. 'Tell us what was in the letter.' They wouldn't listen; they wouldn't stop to think and reason. What did my Augusto need a letter for if he wanted to betray you?"

The cat slid through the open window, walked around the chair, then leaped in one movement on to the table, curled up and lay there, her eyes fixed unblinkingly on Webb. Serafina stretched out one calloused hand and started to stroke her.

"Then there was something else they kept screaming about. There was no one to prove his story that you and he had planned to go to the Motterone, but that later in the afternoon came the news that Pietro was going to send two men over to the island, so you told Augusto to go ahead alone."

She took her hand away from the soft grey fur, and the cat rolled over on her agile back, pawing the air.

"And when he saw the lights from up there and heard the honking of horns and saw the island ablaze as if Judgment Day had come, he raced home like a madman and he fell to his knees and prayed that you had gone as planned and that he had missed you. And, back he ran—all the way to the fork, to see if you had come.

"You remember," said Serafina, "you were not even supposed to be there. That was all that mattered to Augusto. And when they came for him, when we heard them coming, he turned to me and said, 'I've sinned, Serafina, for I didn't care about the fate of those others who were my people. I only cared for the *Inglese*, because he was the best of them all!"

Serafina shoved back her chair; she went past him to the window and stood there, her big shoulders heaving, but when she cried, no sound came; only her body continued shaking.

"His death," she said . . . "there was no dignity in his death. They made him run—run away from them. He didn't want to, but they pushed him on. So now they can carry their heads high and feel they are not to blame, for didn't he drown himself! Didn't Augusto drown himself!"

"And Pietro?" Webb asked. "The man who appointed your husband to work with us, couldn't he help Augusto in some way?"

"That's what we hoped for. Augusto was sure that he had heard about the raid. He kept waiting for a message, an order. He even tried to contact him, but Pietro seemed to have vanished." Serafina turned her head. "And then we knew," she said, "why there was no word from him. He had been caught by the Germans himself. They shot him."

"Did anyone ever discover his identity? Did Augusto know who he really was?"

"I wouldn't know," answered Serafina. "A secret was safe with Augusto. And the rumours said that Pietro refused to disclose his true name, even in the face of death."

Between his fingers, Webb noticed, he had rolled a crumb of the soft yellow cheese into a ball.

"Serafina," he said, "when you stood here and saw the lights flash across the island and knew the Germans had come, what did Augusto think then, who did Augusto think had betrayed us?"

"Who?" repeated Serafina. "Who? Well, who was there? Three people besides Augusto knew about you. Lunati, the doctor in Omegna; Pancaldi, the lawyer in Pella; and the girl."

"Why Lunati?"

"The doctor? Why, he always needed money. He's a gambler, didn't you know? Eight months out of the year he sits there in the old house in Omegna and takes care of the de Crestis, but four months during the winter, when the de Crestis are away, off he goes to San Remo, Campione or down to Monte Carlo. All the money in the world would never last him."

"And the lawyer?"

"He hated it. He hated the whole district. He always thought he was too good for us. You see, *signore*, he wanted to get away. To be a big shot. And when the Germans attacked the Allies in the Battle of the Bulge, when it looked as if the enemy would stay here for years to come still——" She shrugged.

The silence grew, rendering the buzzing flies momentarily mute. They seemed to hang from the ceiling, unable to stir. The cat stopped licking herself.

Serafina turned. "You do not ask: Why the girl?"

"I do not need to ask. Like Augusto, I trust her."

Serafina came back to where he sat.

"*Signore*," she said, "nothing can give me back my husband or my children. And the way I lost them has shown me one thing, in spite of what I said—people do not need a reason for anything they do. They do what they must do because they can't help doing it; bad or good, it doesn't matter. The reasons are invented later. But how, *signore*, will you ever be able to avenge Augusto and give him back his honest name if you start by making exceptions?"

Webb went to the island uninvited that night. He went on impulse and because it seemed so natural to him to go to see Julie.

The family was in the wide room where Julie had faced them the night before. Julie came towards him, lightly and quickly.

"How nice of you to come, Webb." Her voice rang out very clearly, almost defiantly.

Webb looked at the members of the family; Francesca de Cresti, intent on the backgammon board, as if pondering the next important move; Graziella, head down, knitting furiously; crippled Lucretia forgetting to stop shuffling the tiny deck of cards; and Renata humming to herself behind the open wing of the grand piano. Only one pair of eyes stared at him in indiscreet surprise, and as Webb's glance was drawn by those probing eyes, he recognized Lunati, the doctor.

"My friend," said Lunati, clasping his hands high over his head in a jovial greeting. "Miracles do happen, don't they? I was just told of your return to the living. I would have stopped by the inn on my way home to shake hands with you. I cannot tell you how happy it makes me to see you again."

He took off his rimless glasses and wiped them as if emotion had steamed them. A gambler, Serafina had said of him, but he looked respectable enough. Rather stockily built, with a beard, jovial face, immaculately but not, like Carlo, nonchalantly dressed.

"Come and sit over here," Lunati went on. "Come and tell me how you managed to keep alive. Nerves like iron, I should say. Yes, you English, you're either made of steel or you break at the very first touch."

Webb sat down opposite the doctor in a chair by the second fireplace.

"I've often pondered the question of what makes some people survive indescribable hardships while others perish without giving themselves a chance. . . ." The little doctor monopolized him busily. "Excuse me, Contessa . . . my ladies."

He bowed in the direction of Francesca and the aunts, and Francesca said, "I think you were interrupted after the first movement, Renata. Why don't you go on? . . . Giulia, it was your move."

Renata obediently began to play, and Julie tiptoed back to take her place opposite her grandmother.

But Lunati continued to chatter on, lowering his voice just enough not to disturb Renata's rather unexpectedly brilliant performance: "Well, Carr, you know at what conclusion I finally arrived? Imagination. Those who are blessed with it die off like flies; the others survive."

"There are other reasons," said Webb. "Revenge serves to keep a man alive if

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the desire is strong enough. . . . If you feel that what you did was rendered futile . . . or disastrous because some swine betrayed you."

Lunati took his glasses off for a second time, blinked and put them on again. "Don't tell me that you still feel that strongly?"

"Of course not," replied Webb, watching the doctor's hands — unexpectedly slim, nervous hands—bring a tobacco pouch from his pocket and push it back again. "But there were times, at the beginning, when I felt it was worth while suffering everything, just to have a chance to ring the traitor's neck one day."

"Well, other people did that job for you. Undoubtedly you've heard."

WEBB thought of the singing vineyards, the barking dogs, of Serafina standing at the small window, her shoulders shaking.

"I can't make myself believe it."

"Nor can I . . . nor can I," said the doctor, with a queer smile about his sensuous lips. "Never thought for a moment Augusto could do a thing like that."

"Who then?"

Lunati moved his chair a little closer. "The boy," he said. "Apollo. You may not remember him. Doubt very much that you ever met him, but it has always been my guess that Augusto shielded his son. He loved that boy—a little rogue if there ever was one."

The music had stopped, but Webb realized it only when Renata's voice suddenly addressed him, "I don't think we've met. . . . Move over, Lunati, and let me have a chance to talk to Giulia's Inglese. . . . I'm Carlo's wife, Renata de Cresti.

"You know," she said, sliding down on to the low, narrow bench in front of the fireplace, "I am really very, very curious. I hope you don't mind my being so frank, Mr. Carr. You Anglo-Saxons are so tight-lipped, I know, but really, there are so few romantic people left in this sad world of ours that I can't help being fascinated."

She gave him a quizzical, slightly mocking glance, and went on: "Well, I think it romantic to pick up the traces of the past and dedicate oneself to justice. In Orta all tongues are wagging about your belief in Augusto's innocence. Some think you're a fool.

"Tell me," Renata went on, fastening her beautiful eyes on his face, "what was Giulia like when you met her first? I only know her since I married Carlo, two years ago. Carlo says she has changed greatly. Of course, she went through terrible experiences, but I would never have thought she'd have the courage to do all the things she did then."

Webb looked across the room to where Julie was sitting, her left hand cupping her chin, her right hand tapping the backgammon board. Renata watched him intently, but he did not notice it.

"Frightened at first, naturally," he answered, "then very courageous and efficient."

Renata bent a little closer, her smile deepened. She said teasingly, "Did you fall in love with her then, or now?"

"I wish I knew," said Webb, and he laughed because he had not been able to fool her. "At this moment it seems that I have been in love with her all my life."

"Didn't she tell you that she is engaged to marry the son of our closest friends, Orlando Monte d'Oro?"

Webb drew back, for a moment too shocked to hide his surprise. Had Julie remained so aloof because she loved somebody else?

"You mean she loves Monte. . . ." He hesitated and Renata finished for him

the name he had not quite caught, repeating it slowly and clearly, "Orlando Monte d'Oro." Then, reflecting quickly that she might be quoted, she chose her words carefully, "I do not know. But even to Giulia love is not all that matters. Not the only reason for a marriage."

He looked again across the room. Had Julie been so disturbing this morning—had she remembered the little incident of her childhood about trying to escape her shadow—because her family wanted her to marry a man she perhaps did not want to marry?

"I doubt it," he said. "I do not know her well enough to argue the point, but——" He broke off, suddenly understanding that Renata was warning him not to interfere with a decision taken before he had even come upon the scene.

"You don't know the de Crestis," she told him softly. "And Giulia is a de Cresti not only by name. She's a part in the unit the family has formed for centuries. That's why they were able to survive. It's their strength. It's what makes them, their morals, their point of view, their attitude. I'm proud to be one of them."

She looked up at Julie, who, unnoticed by her, must have left the room, for now she was standing at the threshold, the dark brown frame of the door making a perfect frame for her. Infatuation, Renata thought angrily: sentimentality, romanticism. We cannot afford to lose her. She must be made to see reason. Piedmont alone won't be enough. Carlo will need the support of Lombardy, and unless Giulia marries Monte d'Oro he will lose in the election.

Julie crossed the room. "A message just came for you," she said; "a cable, Webb. The innkeeper sent a man over. He's still waiting in the boat, if you want to send back an answer."

HE could feel the silent animosity in the room as something almost tangible. Francesca de Cresti looked across to where he sat as if she wanted to remark ironically on the bad manners of a foreigner daring to have his mail delivered at the *palazzo*, but she only smiled and shrugged.

He hadn't expected an answer to his cable quite that soon. "Pardon me," he said, tearing it open and feeling oddly tense. Strangely enough, there was in Julie a high-strung rigidity, as if she were holding her breath, as if to her, too, the answer meant decision.

"Dealer advises contact discreetly Manfredo Acuto, Corso Vittorio 121, Milan," he read. He folded the thin blue paper and pushed it into his pocket.

"No answer," he said.

"No answer," repeated Julie to someone Webb could not see. And "No

answer," Angelina called down the stairs. Below, the maid took it up and relayed it to the man waiting in his boat at the blue-and-white painted pole in front of the middle terrace.

Lunati seemed to realize only then that there was a boat waiting on the water. "Wait, wait!" he called, rising to his feet. "The man might take me over, so I won't have to trouble anyone here. I'm sorry I missed Carlo tonight."

And it was only then that Webb missed Carlo. Again the feeling that Carlo knew something about the Titian he wanted to keep secret rose in him. If his supposition was correct and Carlo knew more than he cared to reveal—knew, perhaps, the man he had just been advised to see—then his job came first.

"Will you give me a lift, Doctor Lunati?" he called. "I think I'd better be going, too."

Acuto liked to eat well and he liked to eat alone. When evening came and his day's work was done, he would send across to the restaurant which was famous for its food all over Milan and have dinner brought to his office on the ground floor of a big, ugly tenement building.

ABOUT that time the local children would gather below his window, waiting for him to choose among them, and whoever was appointed would gallop across the street, oblivious of the dangers of heavy traffic, to return with a neatly covered basket of delicious-smelling food.

All the time Acuto ate, the small boys and girls would huddle there, quietly waiting for him to finish. And then would fight like wildcats for what was left. He never left very much, for the years during which Acuto had starved had left a wild craving in his stomach.

As a boy, frequently jailed, he had learned from hardened offenders to live as if each day were his last, so that he would never have anything to regret. Now, almost sixty, there was little Acuto regretted and hardly anything he had missed.

The de Crestis might pore over a heavy leatherbound book with musty pages, yellowing at the edges, and brag about their heroic ancestors. Manfredo Acuto was no less in awe of his own deeds. He had the gift of speech, and could get drunk on words and believe momentarily in his own explanations. But he had learned how to be patient. He talked rarely, and only to his daughter, to whom the incidents in her father's life became the fairy tales of her childhood.

An orphan boy growing up as a goatherd in a tiny, absurd village at the foot of the Monte Rosa, he had dreamed of the world beyond the mountains, of riches and security.

To Acuto, wars had not meant death and misery but opportunity. The first one had given him a chance to smuggle contraband between Switzerland and Italy; in the second he had used his funds to operate on a large scale on the black market. But officially he was known as a moneylender.

He lived in a small, drab apartment above his office, but most of his time was spent in the modestly furnished room on the ground floor whose windows were barred against burglary and shuttered against light. At night, when the house was asleep and the street quiet, Acuto, too stimulated to sleep, too aroused by thoughts of new business horizons, would tiptoe downstairs like a thief, turn the key noiselessly and open the huge hidden safe.

He would take out, one after the other, the amassed treasures. And like a child, sitting on his haunches, he would feast his eyes on the rare beauty of a golden monstrance, or a sixteenth-century goblet, or let the jewels, freed from their settings, run through his fingers and watch the light glitter on the cold white value of diamonds.

The Titian once had been locked in the same safe. It had been with trembling hands that Acuto had unrolled the heavy canvas, stuck it into the frame of a mirror and sat back in his chair to look at it for hours on end.

A satisfaction almost as deep as spiritual peace would quiet him then, enchant him with the knowledge that what once only kings had been able to afford was now the property of Manfredo Acuto. And his eyes would wander from the Titian to the picture of his daughter on the desk. Her mother, his dead wife, had never meant much to him, but from the first he had adored his daughter. To look at her, watch her, talk to her, gave him a feeling that his potentialities were unlimited, that he had not yet tapped all his resources. He liked to caress her, touch her soft brown hair, her fine unblemished skin.

To send her away to the best boarding school in all Italy had been one of the two great sacrifices of his life.

The other was the sale of the Titian. And so, having robbed himself of the two things he loved most, Acuto felt almost poor, bereaved. It was because of Maria that he had sold the painting. For it had become clear to him that Europe, in spite of his own success, was no continent for a daughter of his to grow up in.

To the old class, engaged in what was perhaps its last deadly struggle, he would always remain the upstart; and against the new ones fighting for power, he had committed the unexpiable crime of profiting from their misery. Acuto knew that the only way to avoid retaliation upon Maria was to give her a new start altogether. Yet to have her educated in an American school cost dollars.

The night after Acuto had authorized Suter to give his name and address to Carr, but under no circumstances to reveal him as the lawful owner. Acuto could not sleep. With the shutters tightly closed, but all lights blazing, he had opened his safe, seeking assurance and stimulation from his secret treasures.

It was long past midnight when there came to his ears the gentle squeak of the front door being opened.

ONLY his own visitors would come so cautiously; his neighbours had nothing to hide. Without stirring from his chair, Acuto listened. The heavy door closed as softly as it had been opened, steps tiptoed along the passage, hesitated at his door and walked on. Acuto knew that no light betrayed his presence, for all cracks in the door had been cautiously filled with black felt. All the same, as soon as he heard the steps turning towards the staircase he turned off the lights.

The steps had come to a stop above his head, at the door to his own apartment, and Acuto could hear the knock of impatient fingers and the shrill of his bell, jangling on and on. There was an urgency in the sound, and he stood with his eyes closed, in an attitude of intent concentration, breathing deeply and regularly, as he had trained himself to do in moments of tension. Then he moved towards the window and unfastened one of the shutter hooks.

After a while he heard the footsteps come down, less cautious now, making a small, hollow noise on the cement staircase. They stopped at his office door. Acuto heard the handle move, a knock and a second one, then the house door opened and closed, and Acuto drew back the shutter a few inches.

Outside, the street lay deserted, and in the dim light of the lanterns he recognized the man he had expected to see—Carlo de Cresti. He watched him cross the street, walking very fast, and vanish in the dark before he hooked back the shutter and turned on the light again.

To be continued next week

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Bert Wellstead, J.P.: he writes on the slowness of magistrates' courts

Miss Margaret Holt: family diaries can put pep into the dullest days

G. F. Machan: he found keys of phone coin box, exchange wasn't interested

FREE SPEECH

PROPRIETOR OF A holiday camp, I have been daily receiving an average of 100 letters since the beginning of the year—and this will go on until about the end of April.

Fifty per cent of them are inquiries for accommodation already taken during July and August. We cater for 300 people, and just to refuse bookings is costing me £12 a week in postage, registered envelopes and clerical assistance.

The amount of money wasted all over the country by the millions of people who try to cram themselves into holiday centres at the same time must be astronomical. There seems to me a very good case for staggered school holidays.—H. P., Yarmouth. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Extravagance in Germany

SALARY OF A FRIEND of mine who has an office job with the Control Commission in Germany is £12 a week. He lives in a five-roomed central-heated flat, and his wife has a maid. He can afford his weekly ration of 190 cigarettes and his monthly ration of ten bottles of spirits; he can afford to run his own car and to take his wife on holiday to Switzerland twice a year.

Well, maybe he earns it: he's helping to put Germany right. So was I, until my release from the Army. The difference was that I slept in a dirty old hut in Spandau, Berlin, with thirty other soldiers, and received only ninety inferior cigarettes as the weekly ration.

Who is paying for this extravagant administration of Germany? — J. H. PRICE, Bryn Poeth, Llanddyfnan, Anglesey.

Irish!

IT IS VERY DIFFICULT for an Irish Nationalist to get space for his views in an English paper, but one fact emerges from the recent general election in Northern Ireland that might show the position in a truer light to British readers.

In Sir Basil Brooke's home county, Fermanagh, the following figures resulted: Unionists, 13,895; Nationalists, 15,582. The majority was *against* Sir Basil Brooke's party.

All the same, geographical boundaries allowed the Unionists to return two representatives to Stormont, and the Nationalists only one.—J. N. MCDONNELL, Kilsaran, Dundalk, Co. Louth, Ireland.

Operator Wasn't T-r-roubled

RECENTLY IN A TELEPHONE booth I found a bunch of keys hanging from the lock of the coin box, evidently left by a G.P.O. engineer.

Dialling the exchange, I reported the find to the girl operator, and after a few minutes' wait she asked me, very casually, to hand them in to an information bureau a couple of miles away. I hadn't the time to spare, and told her so—and so we left it at that.

Someone might have had the gumption to thank me and either get my name and address, or ask me to hand them in to the nearest police station. Those keys in the hands of the wrong type could have been a source of income for a long time.—G. F. MACHAN, 2 Sandhurst Terrace, Leeds, 8.

Last In, First Out . . .

A FOREMAN ASKED in "Free Speech," February 19, how he should go about selecting redundant workers for dismissal.

From personal experience I would tell him to dismiss those with least length of service. "Last in, first out," should be the principle. I was dismissed by this method after the war, and I was quite satisfied, as were the others who left with me.—E. J. MEAD, 78 Rosebery Road, London, N.9.

. . . Or Married Women?

THE DECISION OF a shop meeting at our factory was that married women should be the first to go, and then in the order "last in, first out," until key workers were affected. After that, the single men without heavy home responsibilities. But I cannot understand why there should be redundancy when the call is for more and more production.—W. F., London, N.18. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Come to Britain!

IT ISN'T ANY WONDER that the Health Scheme has cost so many millions more than was anticipated, when foreigners can come here and get all the treatment and appliances they require free.

This is carrying philanthropy a shade too far. Aneurin Bevan should make it clear that only residents of these islands are eligible for treatment, or he will find himself having to foot the bill for false teeth and spectacles for thousands of tourists this summer.—MRS. V. PAGET, 91 Waddington Avenue, Great Barr, Birmingham, 22a.

Law and the Working Man

AS A WORKING MAN who is also a magistrate, I was greatly interested in JOHN BULL'S leader on the slowness of magistrates' courts (February 19).

Frequently working men who have lost a day's wages to attend court are remanded to appear on another day when they must again lose a day's pay. Though the case might be dismissed these men have, in fact, already been penalized.

As to ways in which procedure can be speeded up, your suggestion of noiseless typewriters to replace the laborious taking of evidence in longhand is an excellent one.—BERT WELLSTEAD, J.P., Winterborne Kingston, Blandford, Dorset.

What's in a Degree?

HERBERT HODGE SAYS (JOHN BULL, February 12) that lack of a degree may handicap a man.

As a professional man with a degree my experience is otherwise. I left an elementary school at fourteen and began life as a fishmonger's errand boy. For six years or so I flitted from job to job, finishing up as a social worker. I studied by correspondence in my spare time, matriculated, and finally emerged from college with a degree.

In my contacts with other professional men of the "old school tie" type, I feel somehow inferior. They have a self-confidence and diction that education alone cannot give. But the great satisfaction I get from my work amply repays me. The people I help are of my own class. My background enables me to see their problems far more sensitively, and they talk to me more easily and freely than to other officials.—PARSON. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Cameraman Looks at Films

THOUGH THE FILM industry would do well to rid itself of the policy of paying a few actors bloated salaries, Harry Watt's technique of using inexperienced unknowns (JOHN BULL, February 19) can be most wasteful. A novice's nervousness may necessitate taking a simple scene fifteen or twenty times.

The answer lies in the development of many more competent professionals, and the thinning out of the present few fabulous salaries.—CAMERAMAN, Kent. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Children Remember

MRS. I'ANSON, THE MOTHER of a three and a half year old girl, is making a mistake in allowing the child to see her parents undressed in the bathroom ("Free Speech," February 19).

It's all very well to say the child thinks nothing of it now, but she is growing up all the time and in later years will remember it.

Prudery apart, it is quite instinctive to hide one's nakedness: it would be more of an effort not to.—Mrs. F. M. BOURYER, 222 Cathcart Road, Bankhead, Rutherglen, Scotland.

Bath for Three

OUR LITTLE girl aged six always has her bath with me. Baby, who is eighteen months, sometimes comes in as well. It's a little cramped but the children enjoy it enormously, and my husband and I can see no wrong in it.—MRS. G. FEARON, 190 Woodhouse Lane, Wythenshawe, Manchester.

Mrs. G. Fearon

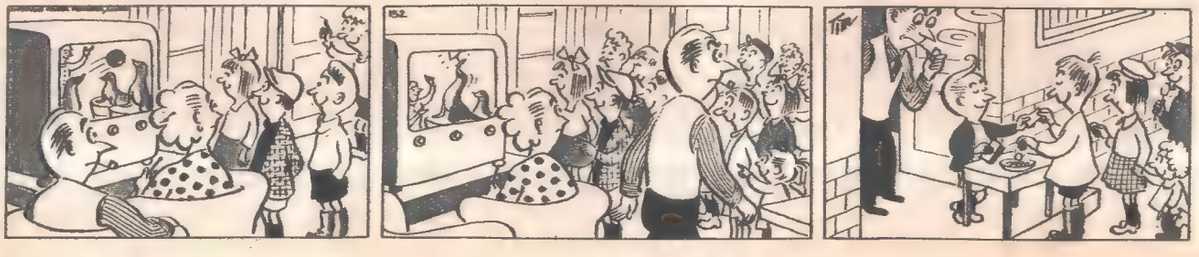
Family Record

WE KEEP A "FAMILY RECORD." It's just a notebook, but every evening an entry is made of the day's most amusing incident, often a trivial family joke. And what a tonic a glance in the Family Book is when life seems dull!—MISS MARGARET HOLT, 19 Nile Street, Preston, Lancs.

Because of space shortage only a limited selection of the many readers' letters submitted can be printed. If your views are squeezed out, it does not mean that they have been overlooked by the Editor. For every letter used, John Bull pays one guinea. Letters should be marked "Free Speech" and carry the full name and address of sender for publication.

OH, JOHNNY!

by TIM



SOCCER STARLET—HANDLE WITH CARE

by JULIAN HOLLAND

Clever youngsters need nursing. It's folly to force them into league rough-and-tumble before they can fully cope

THE FRAGILE, TADPOLE-LIKE figure of young Jimmy Hernon first came into prominence some eighteen months ago, when from the inside-left position he dominated the Leicester City forward line in the latter half of 1947.

Already his was a hardworking, tireless ninety-minute game. He did all the fetching and carrying, all the feeding and plying of the forwards that one expects from really mature players.

When Walter Rowley, the Bolton Wanderers' manager, signed this nineteen-year-old boy last September for the huge figure of £15,000 he said that he had waited years to buy an inside forward of such class. Despite his years, Hernon is probably worth every penny of that £15,000, but he has come on too fast and already shows the signs of staleness which go with too much work and too much responsibility.

And so Rowley has been keeping him in the reserve side for a period.

It is encouraging to see somewhere a policy of far-sightedness at work. Despite its continued record of international successes, English football has been suffering since the war from the same low standards and poor quality of play that has characterized all our other sports.

The war left its mark on the game; and, more than that, it left its mark on the players of the game. Today the bulk of the players in the four divisions of the football league are men too old by prewar standards; or men who while at war missed the vital training years; or inexperienced youngsters.

Of course, the exceptions occur, and they make up the present England Eleven.

They Are Penalized

But it is in that second group (the men whose ages range from twenty-one to twenty-eight) where the immediate loss to football lies. Before the war almost all the players in the game were within this "age-group," but now its ranks are heavily depleted, and those that are left are heavily penalized by their war service.

The passing of each year of peace will tend to right the position but one aspect of it may have serious consequences for some time to come. This is the presence in the game of numbers of youngsters without the physical attributes and the experience to stand up to the fierce struggle of first-class football.

Many of them are the likely internationals of the future, but to force them at an early age through the mill of league football must cause them to lose much of their early promise.

Before the war the clever boy footballer served a long apprenticeship in his reserve or third team. There he developed his early talents, found experience, had no great strain imposed upon him, and was assured that his first team days would come in good time, provided he continued to make the grade. It was a valuable part of his growth as a footballer.

He was able to study the top-class men from a reasonable distance. He had time to learn the tricks of the trade, and, although he might "star" for a season in the reserve eleven, he only got his first team place when he was able to hold it. "Boy" Bastins were very few and far between.

But today the clever youngster is finding his way straight into the first teams. There is little competition, and managers, with directors and supporters to satisfy, cannot look these gift horses too closely in the mouth. With the exaggerated financial importance of promotion and relegation in these first few seasons following the war, managers haven't been able to look ahead too much to such things as "team-building."

But sides that boast of the "youthfulness" of their teams are, in fact, doing a great disservice to football, and the poor quality of play will continue so long as this folly persists.

Bolton wisely put Hernon in reserves. Division One overstrained him

Get Knocked About

These boys are often not physically strong enough to play in league football. All the ball control in the world is of no avail if an opponent can put you on the floor every time he chooses with a simple, fair shoulder charge. After a few matches of such treatment a brilliant young footballer may lose his confidence, may even lose his nerve and become afraid of being "caught" with the ball. Thus, another potential international may be lost to the game, and at a time when the game can ill-afford the loss.

In Bolton Wanderers' reserve team, Hernon is getting some of the valuable training he has missed, while his frail eight stone of flesh and bones is being fed and built up like a turkey for Christmas.

Slender and light of build, this young Scot used to lead the teen-age Leicester forward line with all the brain of an old head. The space between the centre circle and his own penalty area was his base. There were no intermittent sorties into no-man's land; that fertile area around the centre circle he made his own.

Hernon has many of the commanding qualities on the field that we have seen in Mannion. He knows how to hang behind his forward line, controlling and shepherding them goalwards like a hen driving her brood of chicks to new pickings.

He stands like Mannion, watching and waiting on the fringe of his side's defence, ever ready to snatch up a clearance and turn it immediately into an attack.

A defender will emerge from a goalmouth mêlée looking for Hernon, and, seeing him, will drive the ball hard and low to his boot. Hernon will scoop it into the easy, long-striding run of his dribble—to place it finally at the feet of his forwards in front of the opponents' goal.

Little time is wasted: the ball moves from goal to goal almost as fast as legs can travel. It might be thought of as a "breakaway"—but it is an *organized* breakaway, executed without any of that uncertainty that accompanies the wild clearance kick introducing most breakaways.

Hernon's height and slimness give him that "natural" swerve in a dribble that is the initial feature of Matthews's deceptiveness. His ball control is irreproachable and he also possesses Matthews's baffling sleight of foot. But above all—and this is the mark of the great footballer—he never does more with the ball than the situation demands.

If a man can be beaten merely by running past him, then this wise old head on the narrow young shoulders will know to do no more than that. If a man will not come into the tackle, then Hernon will "dummy" him.

Foxed Again and Again

I once saw Hernon playing against a wing-half who was very reluctant to tackle. Hernon beat him once, beat him twice, beat him three times: Still the man did not learn. Still he hesitated. Hernon beat him four, five and six times.

Each time he used an identical method—the need for a different trick never arose. Before the game was over Hernon must have beaten that wing-half over twenty times by that one method.

All he did was to halt in front of his opponent and make as if to kick the ball right-footed in a long lazy pass to his left-winger. Then he checked the foot on the inside of the ball, turned it out to his right and ran on with it while his opponent groped across to intercept the pass that never came.

Hernon was perfectly balanced to make the pass. He could have carried out the "original intention" part of the dummy if his opponent had ever called his bluff. Jimmy won either way. It was an elementary trick, but the exactness with which it was executed made it seem a high-grade affair.

That same exactness and wise headedness characterize all his tricks, all his dribbles, all his passes, all his play.

It seems enough that an inside-forward should do only a portion of his present-day task well, making himself into a kind of handyman quarter-back, doing the foraging in mid-field and bringing the ball to the forwards, making the goals for them to score. But Hernon is complete.

At the end of his fetching and carrying he is there as a forward to take the final pass and score from it should it come to him. This completeness makes him potentially the best player on Bolton's books, and a certain Scottish international of the future. In so young a man this completeness calls for the sort of careful nursing that Rowley clearly believes in.

Great Forward Lines

Since the 1914-18 war Bolton has seen two great forward lines. In the twenties, when it won the Cup at Wembley three times in the space of seven years, there was Butler, David Jack, J. R. Smith, Joe Smith and Teddy Vizard. And then in the thirties there was another line which just missed great success but which brought the club back into the first division: G. T. Taylor, Eastham, Milsom, Westwood and Cook.

With Hernon's promise fulfilled there may be yet a third before long. It is around such players as he that great lines form. And if one does, then the thanks must ultimately go to a manager's foresight.

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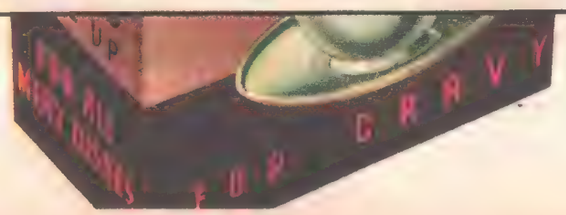

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dale. These solitary, morbid fells were no place for sane human beings. Perhaps the old man would have kept his reason if he had gone to live in a town after the tragedy, instead of trailing about among these forgotten heights.

Purnley got up. "I really must be going."

"Nay," protested Harry, "not afore tha sees Tom. He'll be here in a minute." He raised a finger. "Did tha hear?"

There was no doubt about it, a sheep had blared quite close to the top. And from below the edge rose a stony clicking, the rustle of granite chippings trickling away beneath the prodding of feet. Though Purnley knew that all he would see in a minute would be a placid ewe and her lamb scuttling over the lip of the crag, he found himself sweating.

The ghost of a breeze came out of nowhere, dank and chilly, and sighed away. A lamb among the grazing flock gave a sharp, unexpected bleat, and the shock of it made Purnley jump.

"Look here," he almost shouted. "I'm in a hurry. I can't wait. Sorry."

"But Tom's here," said the old man reasonably. "He's just——"

"I tell you!" answered Purnley, and he was truly shouting now, "it's only some odd ewe. What the hell's the use of me waiting for a blessed sheep?"

Fear had brought fury into his voice, and the old man stared at him. Over the edge bobbed the white face of a Herdwick ewe and behind her came her rounded and black-speckled lamb.

"See! Only a ewe and her lamb," said Purnley shakily.

But there was something else behind the lamb. It was a hand. It slid up and grabbed a spur of rock, and then a face drew level with it—Tom's face.

Purnley's throat made a choking noise. In the instant he had turned and was running, running desperately back towards the dale, away from this madness.

Tom drew himself over the edge. Nearby somebody had started to laugh gustily. It was Bayne, who had come up silently and unseen.

"Surely that chap were Purnley?" said Tom, his face wrinkled with puzzlement. "'Tis a good riddance, surely. But what could hev made him run laike that?"

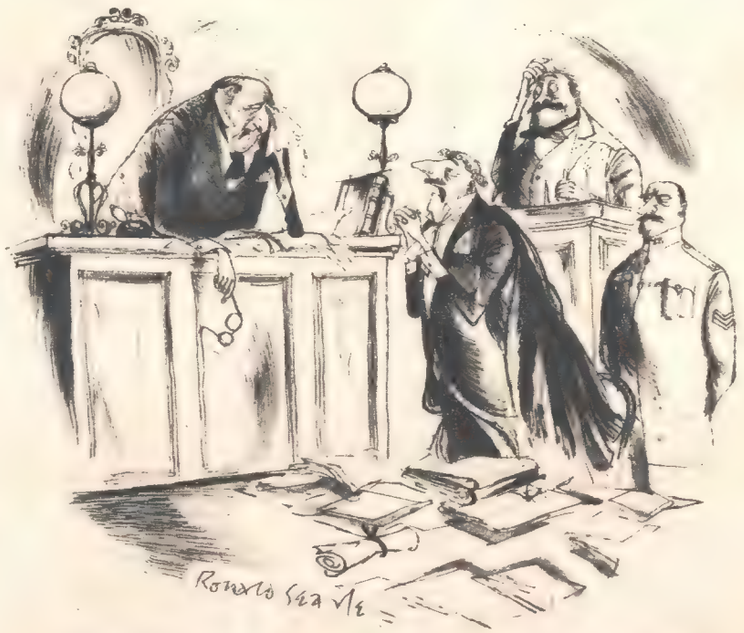
Bayne found his breath. "Ah told him aboot tha slippin' on Mart Crag. Ah didn't tell him tha slipped only a foot."

THIS WEEK'S COVER

AS A CHILD Douglas L. Mays never knew the delights of a muddy puddle. His parents always made him walk in front, he says. In picturing the antics of the Gumboot Gang for the cover he has righted past wrongs by letting his gang play with joyous abandon behind parental backs.

Tantrums in Court

by HERBERT HODGE



An eloquent defending counsel can reduce the magistrate to tears

I'VE BEEN LEARNING a little more about what goes on underneath a policeman's helmet — and why policemen won't tell (or won't tell me)—since I asked about it on this page the other week.

A retired policeman writes to point out that while I, as a citizen, am free to say what I like about the police, the serving policeman is not free to say all he'd like to say himself—whether about the police or the public. I suppose that includes quite a lot of what goes on underneath his helmet as he stands there watching the world go by.

Another reader reminds me that before I start getting annoyed with a policeman who (in my opinion) is being far too uppish with me, I ought to remember that his sergeant may have just been equally uppish with him, and perhaps that sergeant's inspector even more uppish with *him*—and that I may be simply the last unlucky link in a chain of natural consequences.

Which is all very understandable, but not very satisfying. What am *I* supposed to do? Kick the nearest dog?

The most interesting answer to my question has come to me in a book, *Your Policemen are Wondering*, by Detective-Sergeant Alec J. Comryn. It isn't a brand new book. It was first published in 1947, and deals, in part, with prewar days, when the writer was a uniformed policeman on the beat.

It's very much the sort of thing I like. Just a policeman jotting down his thoughts as he goes about his daily work —around the streets, in court, at a fire, and so on. Alec Comryn is a policeman who takes nothing for granted—a man who's always asking himself why.

For instance, there's the Monday morning when he has to go to court with two men he's arrested for stealing three shillingsworth of condensed milk. He looks at the pitiful little group of prisoners — chiefly Saturday night drunks, and a few women and girls brought in for shoplifting.

Right is Might

Then he looks round at the official side of the court. There's a barrister, a magistrates' clerk, four solicitors, a school attendance officer, two probation officers, two police superintendents, a sergeant and twelve constables, including himself.

And he thinks: We all knock up a tolerable living and are respected in our different spheres. Yet we harvest no golden grain, we dig for no coal, turn no wheels, weave no cloth, make no tools, sail no ships. Our reason for existence is in that handful of quaking, goggle-eyed pilferers we have bundled into the dock and labelled criminals. Deny these to us and we are without living or status. It's a discomforting thought.

It certainly must be—for a policeman. But it's comforting for the ordinary citizen to discover that a policeman can remain human enough to feel like that about it. How many policemen, I wonder, while waiting their turn with proper official solemnity in court, are silently pulling to pieces the J.P.s on the Bench?

Of one magistrate this policeman says: "A defending solicitor who knows his job can reduce him to tears; conversely, a prosecuting solicitor can lash him into such quaking anger that he is ready to pass the most outrageous sentence on the prisoner, and would do were not the magistrates' clerk there to restrain him."

Sneers of Disbelief

Then there's his description of a much younger and more alert J.P. who listens closely both to the defence and the prosecution, but can be swayed in one way only. The defending solicitor may reduce himself to tears—but all he'll get out of this magistrate are impatient head shakes and sneers of disbelief.

On the other hand, says Alec Comryn, this J.P. "will devour anything the prosecution has to say; his eyes will narrow and a flush of anger rise up from his neck to his face as the tale of the prisoner's guilt is unfolded before him."

Which is exactly the kind of thing I've always feared—a very discomforting thought for the ordinary citizen who may find himself up before such a magistrate at any moment.

After all, you never know. It's the kind of thing that may happen to anybody. You don't necessarily have to be guilty of anything to find yourself in the dock.

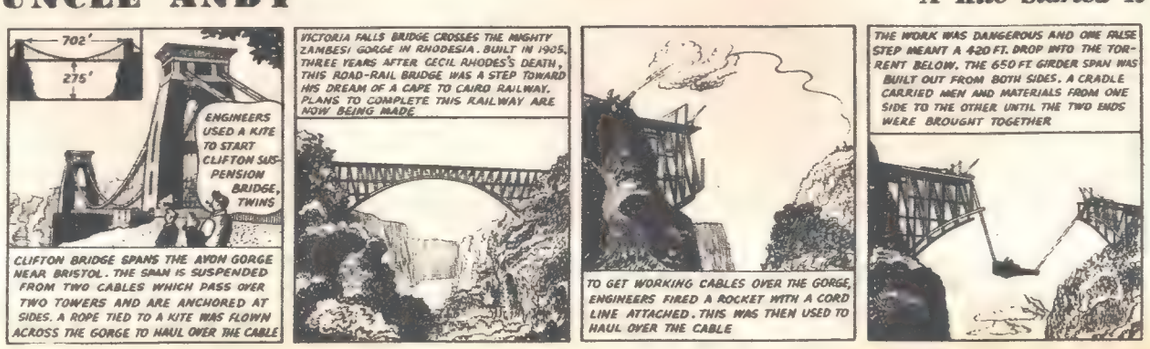
Alec Comryn says the police will think it very unsporting of you to plead "not guilty." After they've been to all the trouble of preparing the evidence and bringing you to trial, they feel that when you plead "not guilty" and start denying everything, you're not playing the game. Which sounds so thoroughly human that I can well believe it—though, as defendant, I should undoubtedly take a rather dim view of "the game."

Taking him all round, Alec Comryn strikes me as being the ideal copper—just the chap to meet when you're in any sort of trouble.

If what goes on under his helmet is in any way typical of what goes on under other policemen's helmets, we've got some profound philosophers among our policemen. It's a pity we don't hear from them more often.

UNCLE ANDY

A Kite Started It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ENGINEERS USED A KITE TO START CLIFTON SUSPENSION BRIDGE, TWINS
CLIFTON BRIDGE SPANS THE AVON GORGE NEAR BRISTOL. THE SPAN IS SUSPENDED FROM TWO CABLES WHICH PASS OVER TWO TOWERS AND ARE ANCHORED AT SIDES. A ROPE TIED TO A KITE WAS FLOWN ACROSS THE GORGE TO HAUL OVER THE CABLE
VICTORIA FALLS BRIDGE CROSSES THE MIGHTY ZAMBESI GORGE IN RHODESIA. BUILT IN 1905, THREE YEARS AFTER CECIL RHODES'S DEATH, THIS ROAD-RAIL BRIDGE WAS A STEP TOWARD HIS DREAM OF A CAPE TO CAIRO RAILWAY. PLANS TO COMPLETE THIS RAILWAY ARE NOW BEING MADE
TO GET WORKING CABLES OVER THE GORGE, ENGINEERS FIRED A ROCKET WITH A CORD LINE ATTACHED. THIS WAS THEN USED TO HAUL OVER THE CABLE
THE WORK WAS DANGEROUS AND ONE FALSE STEP MEANT A 420 FT. DROP INTO THE TORRENT BELOW. THE 650 FT GIRDER SPAN WAS BUILT OUT FROM BOTH SIDES. A CRADLE CARRIED MEN AND MATERIALS FROM ONE SIDE TO THE OTHER UNTIL THE TWO ENDS WERE BROUGHT TOGETHER

END DRY SCALP — and what a difference!

THESE two pictures tell a story. On the left, this man has got Dry Scalp. How untidy his hair looks! Dry and lifeless, won't stay in place. Loose dandruff shows, at his parting and on his coat collar.

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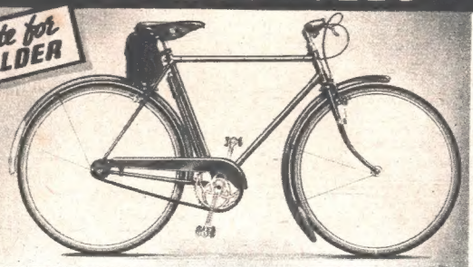

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He Swept The Clouds Away

"THOUSANDS of full and happy hours when life for me would otherwise have been grim indeed." That, he tells us, is what his *Bullets* hobby has meant to forty-nine year old reader G. Rodgers, 25 Bishop Road, Anfield, Liverpool.

With a family of nine to bring up, life has not been easy for this ex-soldier of the first World War. But the other Friday he got a telegram from JOHN BULL telling him he'd won £500 for his well-phrased First Prize comment on armaments: NEW TEETH—MENACING "TWICE BITTEN" WORLD.

"This grand prize plus a new job I hope to begin soon have swept away the clouds," this winner added.

Have *you* any worries that need sweeping away? Start now on the absorbing hobby of *Bullets* and you can win £500 *and* an Easter celebration with your coupon below. The 3,119 other prizes for this contest include 100 3-lb. game pies for Easter—winning one of them would almost make you glad you *missed* one of this week's cheques!

"BULLETS" 1st PRIZE

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(Thursday, April 14, to Tuesday, April 19) including tour of London, seats at a First Division Football Match and stalls at the Palladium Theatre.

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Each cash or Easter Game Pie prize for *Bullet* which was one of 2s. entry of 4 efforts on single coupon (or plain-paper entry sheet) will be accompanied by a *Bullets* Season as Bonus.

RULES 1. First Prize to best *Bullet* received, others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated April 9 and in JOHN BULL dated April 16, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding.

ADD 2, 3 or 4 WORDS to any of these "EXAMPLES"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* on right. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make *Bullet* as usual.

What We Must Do	Delayed Her
The Mad English	In The Background
Spring's Magic	Ruthless
Tonic For The Taxpayer	Sandy's Alarm
Spirit Of Service	Pounced On
Nothing Left	With His Eyes Shut
Crime Doesn't Pay, So	Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions
Safer	
Duke And Dustman	The.....Spoke And
The Stumbling-block	Young Man's.....
Covered Up	Handsome.....
Teacher's Problem	With One.....
Till It Hurts	Used To.....
On Dad's Allotment	Made.....See Red

HUGE HOLIDAY PRIZE OFFER *in this "Bulletin"*

To get the help of *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, including extra winners for your guidance, enclose label below with your *Bullets* or Crossword entry this week.

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope, covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "COMBINED," top left-hand corner.

POST ENTRY "Bullets" 1,672 (or Xword 624) "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

BULLETIN LABEL

STICK 2½d. STAMP here to secure *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated April 2. If this is your first specimen copy please mark × here

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EXAMPLE ON DAD'S ALLOTMENT	6d.
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Fee: 6d. per *Bullet* on coupon or plain paper—see Bonus Offer above.

Closing Postmark, **1,672** MON., MAR. 21

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"I was trained for *Bullets* by the *Bulletin*," said £500 winner Rodgers. Have you joined the regular readers of *John Bull's* entertaining weekly paper for would-be winners? Apply on label adjoining your *Bullets* coupon on this page.

2 BIG CHEQUES WON XWORD 619

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 1, State. 3, Hear. 7, Poet. 8, Cast. 12, Boxes. 13, Tumid. 14, Sage. DOWN: 1, Soap. 2, Text. 4, Rosy or Rose. 5, Truck. 6, Horses or Houses. 9, Shoot. 10, Bold. 11, Rave.

TWO £100 SHARERS: L. E. Fairey, 14 Beech Avenue, Northampton; C. G. Meadows, 3 Ebridge Mill Cottages, North Walsham.

Awards value £25 for Runners-up shared between 11 entrants. In addition, Winners and Runners-up receive Breakfast, Dinner and Tea Services.

"Bullets" Winners 1,667

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Radiogram or Washing Machine: H. J. Smith, 2 Eastbourne Grove, Sketty, Swansea:

IT'S A STATE PUB, SO BARMAID'S BOSSY, NOT "FLOSSIE"!

SECOND PRIZE, £50 plus Radiogram or Washing Machine: Mrs. M. Hook, 131 Woodcock Road, Norwich: NO SMALL THING—THAT MARBLE SONNY *Stole*.

THIRD PRIZE, £25 plus Radiogram or Washing Machine: H. Grant, 70 Renshaw Street, Liverpool, 1: THE COMMON COLD—OF THE *Spirit*, PESSIMISM.

OTHER AWARDS. £10: F. Harris, 3 Wren Road, Summertown, Oxford: NO SMALL HEART—LIGHT AS *Big* ONE. £10: Miss R. Lucas, 69 Park Street, Lye, Stourbridge: PUNCH ON THE NOSE—GIVE "BULLY" LIFE, OCCASIONALLY! £5: W. A. Bell, 9 South Crescent, Thirsk: NO SMALL EFFORT—QUEUEING FOR *Savings* STAMP. £5: Mrs. M. E. Fenn, 42 Station Road, Nostell, Nr. Wakefield; NO SMALL THING—LAUNDRY'S LOST AUNTIE'S NIGHTIE! £5: S. Houltby, 22 Rosalind Avenue, Grimsby: NO SMALL ORDER—"FEEDING" THE *Airlift*, EITHER. £5: C. Norwood, 3 Sandhampton Cottages, Astley, Nr. Stourport-on-Severn: ABSENT-MINDED BEGGAR—DAD—FORGETS INGRATITUDE, TOO. £5: E. J. B. Oliver, 61 Park Avenue, King's Lynn: IF WE DON'T PROVE—CRIME DOESN'T PAY—COSTLY!

For ten winners of £2 10s., see last week's "*Bullets*" *Bulletin*. Supplies limited, so apply immediately on 2d. stamped postcard addressed: Result 1,667, *Bulletin* Dept., 1 Slingsby Place, London, W.C.2.

All prizes have been dispatched including 25 Family Hampers and 3,000 new "Good Shot" Awards.

FOOD PARCELS and XWORD CASH

FIRST PRIZE £100

AWARDS VALUE **£25** Amongst 1st Runners-up

NEW PRIZES —unlimited "Signpost" Awards for 2nd Runners-up.

FOOD PARCELS —a 14-lb. collection of foodstuffs with all prizes value £1 and over.

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter one extra Answer to any *one*, *two* or *three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

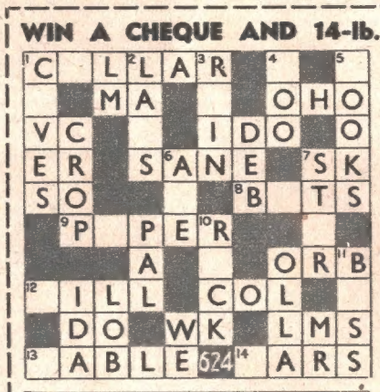
Across Clues XWORD 624

1. A parson is now and then known for his
8. To some degree, luck determines success of man who does this
9. When sadly out of tune, people are sure to criticize one
12. Contents of this won't satisfy everyone
13. Ordinary chap should be able to see the point of one
14. Men are impoverished by what is spent in these

Down Clues

1. Smugglers must have looked for them when landing contraband
2. The word "criminal" describes some of these
3. Even when on holiday, pessimist predicts this
4. It can be very unkind to do this
5. There are lots of these about farms
6. It's more than the work of a minute for one to bring down a plane
7. Public opinion can be very hard to
10. Bed can easily be spoilt by this
11. May be sadly at fault if you can't get harmony

WIN A CHEQUE AND 14-lb. FOOD PARCEL!



In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.), Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.), and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink, not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated April 2.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature below is agreement to Rules.

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

624 Closing Postmark MON., MAR. 21

I enclose P.O. value....

Signed .....

Address.....

No.

Write to John Bull About It

John Bull's expert advisers help to solve readers' personal problems. Answers on points of general interest are published each week

Road Accidents

A. R. (Brighton): Victims of a road accident liable to lose compensation because the vehicle driver is not insured can apply for assistance from the Motor Insurers' Bureau, 60 Watling Street, London, E.C.4.

Self-conscious

E. M. (Liverpool): To stop going out because you are nervous and unhappy in company would be running away from your trouble. You probably find it difficult to be free and easy because you are too self-conscious. Try to cultivate an interest in other people. Concentrate on enjoying yourself and helping others to do the same without worrying about whether you are a "success" or not.

Marriage Allowance

J. S. (Southsea): The increased marriage allowances are applicable to National Servicemen after they have completed twelve months' service.

National Insurance

E. C. (Beccles): The difficulty which has arisen in your case is due to the fact that, like many other non-employed and self-employed men and women, you have failed to apply for a National Insurance card. The application form C.F.6 is obtainable from any employment exchange or local National Insurance office. The card has to be stamped from July 5, 1948, to date, and afterwards week by week.

Medical Appliances

P. Y. (Brighton): There is a long list of appliances which general practitioners may prescribe for their patients under the Health Act. Outside this list, doctors should refer patients to hospital specialists who may prescribe any appliances which they consider necessary. These include diabetic scales, invalid chairs and crutches.

Extra for Hardship

E. J. (Edgware): A partially disabled pensioner of the 1914-18 war may be granted a special hardship allowance not exceeding 20s. a week if because of his war disablement he has had to change the occupation he was following up to July 1, 1945; if he is incapable and likely to remain incapable of resuming the occupation which he followed up to that date; and if he is incapable of following any other suitable occupation at about the same income level.

Observer Corps

W. J. (Denbigh): The upper age limit for the Royal Observer Corps is fifty-five.

Plants You Don't Want

T. L. (Croydon): A scheme for the disposal of surplus plants is in operation throughout Britain. If you hand in your plants to the nearest W.V.S. centre they will be distributed by that organization to people living on temporary housing estates.

It's Taxable

J. T. (Edinburgh): Old age pensions have always been a source of income liable to tax. Liability to tax depends on the total income from all sources.

Our team of experts will solve your queries (except medical) if you send them to the John Bull Free Advice Service, 186 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Domestic problems to "Humanist," at same address. Stamped envelope for reply, please.

.... WITH ENJOYMENT WRITTEN ALL OVER HIS FACE

Batger's Silmo's Lollies

FRUIT DROPS AT THEIR BEST

GIBBS HAPPY FAMILIES

Tip for Treasure Hunters . . .

1 **MR. EARTH** the Explorer is in danger! Trouble is brewing. His journey has lasted so long that stores are getting low . . . but the natives *must* have gifts.

2 **"LUCKY** we've still got some Gibbs," cries Master Earth the Explorer's son, "those red, blue and green cases are sure to please the natives."

3 **"YES,** and they'll like the fresh Gibbs taste as much as we do," agrees Mrs. Earth the Explorer's wife, "it will spruce them up a bit, too."

4 **SERVICE** with a smile now . . . Gibbs works like a charm! Mr. Earth says "Gibbs solid dentifrice is treasure indeed, it lasts so long and only costs **9d.** each."

GD 288-1160

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AND THEIR USES TO MAN

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Foreword by Sir EDWARD J. SALISBURY, C.B.E., F.R.S., Director, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew.

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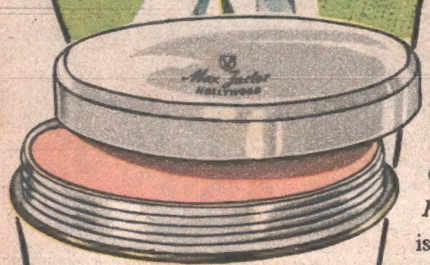

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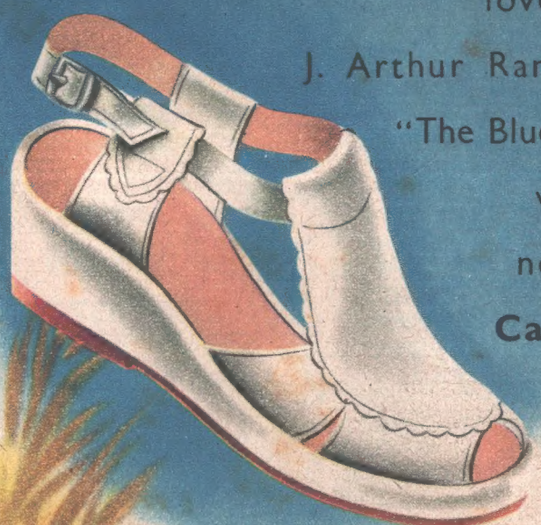

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